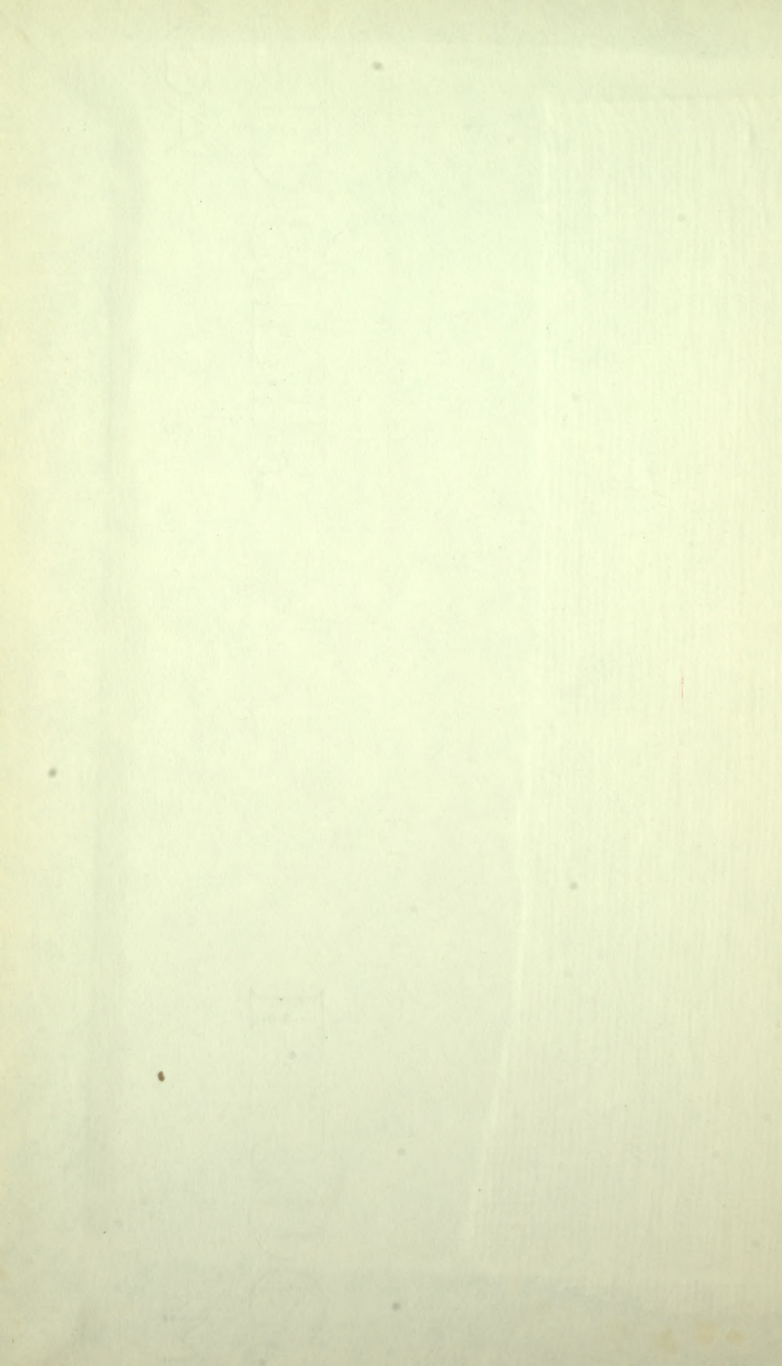


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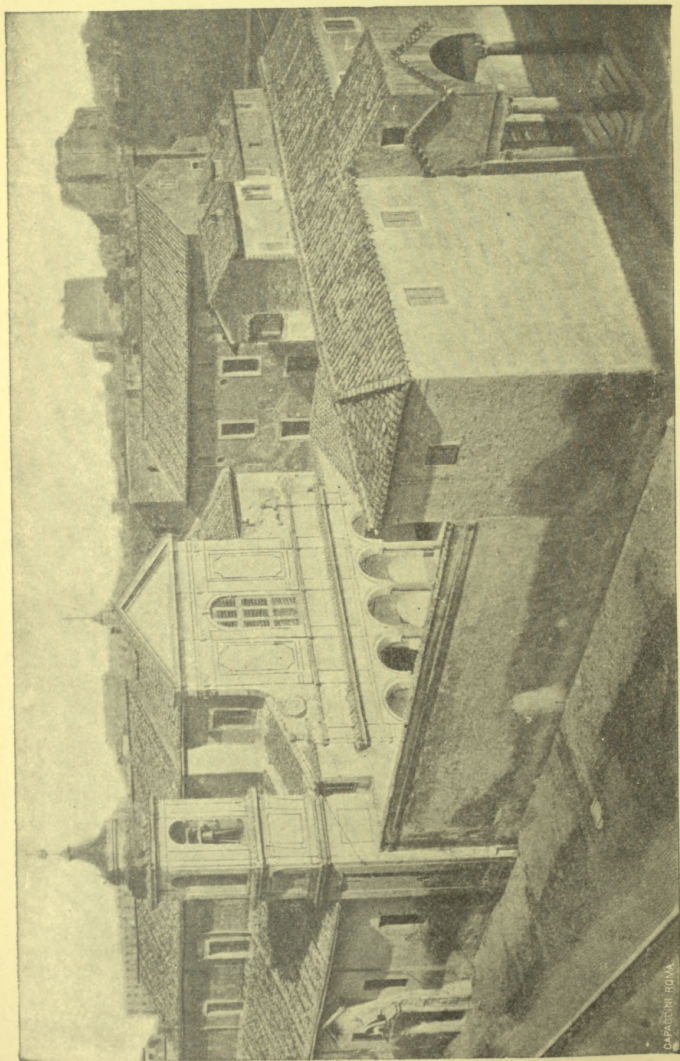
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DAPASONI ROMA

View of Church and Convent of S. Clemente with the Coliseum and the  
Baths of Trajan and Titus in the rear.

LOUIS NOLAN, O. P., B. A.

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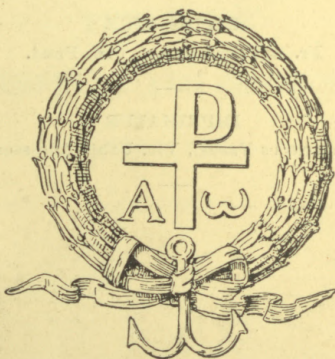
THE  
BASILICA OF S. CLEMENTE  
IN ROME

(Second Edition)

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WITH 61 ILLUSTRATIONS

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GROTTAFERRATA

S. CLEMENTE  
ROMA

TIPOGRAFIA ITALO-ORIENTALE "S. NILO",

1914

Attenta relatione Nobis a Revisoribus facta, ut praesens  
opus typis detur permittimus.

*Romae, 1a Martii, 1914.*

Fr. HYACINTHUS Ma CORMIER, M. G., O. P.

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IMPRIMATUR

Fr. ALBERTUS LEPIDI, Ord. Præd.

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IMPRIMATUR

FRANCISCUS FABERI, Vic. Urbis Adsector.

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MAR 1 1960



TO

HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL O' CONNELL

ARCHBISHOP OF BOSTON

CARDINAL TITULAR OF S. CLEMENTE

THIS WORK

IS GRATEFULLY AND RESPECTFULLY

DEDICATED



---

PREFATORY LETTER <sup>1</sup>  
OF  
COMM. PROFESSOR HORACE MARUCCHI

---

*My dear Fr. Nolan,*

I have read the proof-sheets of your book on the *Basilica of S. Clemente in Rome* with great interest, and I offer you my sincere congratulations on the important work you have produced.

S. Clemente is a great monument, and although it has been described by Fr. Mullooly, by de Rossi, by Wilpert and by others too, since the discovery of the subterranean Basilica, it nevertheless called for further treatment in a complete monograph which should take account of recent studies on the subject, and which should afford a practical and scientific guide to a place which is visited by every cultured person desirous of knowing something about the great Christian memories of our City. The Basilica of S. Clemente is indeed one of the most characteristic monuments in Rome, com-

<sup>1</sup> To the First Edition.



prising, as it does, a marvellous series of constructions superimposed one upon the other and embracing a period of not less than fourteen centuries. Moreover, as is already known, beneath the subterranean Basilica we can see the very ancient walls of a building of the second or third century before Christ. Above these walls rose a house of the first century of the Empire ; this became a « Domestic Church » (*Ecclesia domestica*) in the Apostolic times, and it is probable that here Clement — the disciple of S. Peter — assembled the faithful of Rome. At a still higher level was constructed the Basilica of the period of Constantine of which S. Jerome makes mention ; this Basilica preserved S. Clement's house as a Sanctuary. And, finally, above the ruins of the Basilica, abandoned after the sack of Rome by Robert Guiscard in 1084, was erected the church of the middle ages which is in use today. This succession of buildings, this truly « archaeological stratification », expresses a marvellous historical synthesis.

Above the ruins of the military trophies of the warlike Republic rose Imperial Rome, and here we see the elegant buildings of the first period of the Empire covering the severe Republican walls. In Imperial Rome was inaugurated the new Faith, the civiliser of the world, and Imperial Rome was steeped in the blood of the Martyrs. The ancient *Titulus Clementis* is a

elic of the days of the Apostles and marks the beginning of the persecutions. But there rose over idolatry the victorious banner of Constantine, and the Empire became Christian, and on the primitive Oratory of the Cœlian rose the majestic Basilica of the fourth century.

At a later period when the invasions of the barbarians had been stemmed, and the Byzantine yoke broken, the Papacy emerged triumphant. And on the old walls of S. Clemente, records of Constantine, we have represented Nicholas I., the precursor of Hildebrand, and the civiliser of the Slav peoples; and also Leo IV. who saved Italy from the Saracens. The glorious work of Hildebrand establishes the triumph of the Popes. The Crusades, the first trumpet call of which had been sounded by Hildebrand, set free the Holy Land, and we find in the Basilica of S. Clemente, reconstructed by Pope Paschal II., a triumphal monument of that great event, namely: the « Apotheosis of the Cross » in the apse.

Such a splendid monument then as S. Clemente, which recalls such glorious memories, and which at the same time contains precious works of both ancient and mediæval art, well deserved to be treated apart. The visitor to this church naturally wishes to be put in possession of all the facts. And this was impossible in such a book as that furnished by Armellini who treats of S. Clemente in conjunction with other Roman churches.

ches; neither did it fall within the scope of the author of the work which forms the III. Vol. of the *Eléments d'Archéologie chrétienne* <sup>1</sup>.

In your new work you have examined and described all the details in a manner which leaves nothing to be desired by the learned visitor eager to become fully acquainted with both the subterranean Basilica and the church of the middle ages.

And in describing those frescoes and monuments of the primitive basilica which have been the subject of recent studies you have maintained a prudent reserve in not admitting too hastily certain new explanations. Some of these new theories are very important, such as that of Monsignor Wilpert who sees the « Last Judgment » represented in the fresco on the right wall; though others have preferred to see in it the « Martyrdom of S. Catherine » and the scene of a « Council ». It is very probable that Monsignor Wilpert's interpretation is the true one; but I think it well to point out that this very interpretation was suggested by other archaeologists soon after the discovery of the fresco fifty years ago. (See *Christliches Kunstblatt*, 1859, n. 12, pag. 96) <sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> H. Marucchi, *Basiliques et Églises de Rome*, Desclée, I. Ed. 1902; II. Ed. 1909.

<sup>2</sup> In the I. Ed. of the *Basiliques* (1902), I accepted Fr. Mullooly's opinion as to the Council, but my note of interrogation



I am glad to see also that you have not been too ready to accept the statement that De Rossi was in error regarding the tomb of S. Cyril which he, supported by an ancient legend, believed to be at the apsidal end of the basilica, to the right of the altar (that is to the right of the celebrant). Indeed it is more probable that that monument would stand in a place of honour near the altar than, as some would have it, in the narthex which is, as it were, outside the church proper. It is certain, however, that at the lower end of the basilica and near the spot indicated by De Rossi there is a figure represented on the wall with the name of S. Cyril written beside it. You therefore do well in leaving this question open.

Your book then, which manifests your thorough knowledge of the subject of which it treats, will be not only exceedingly useful but indispensable to all who wish to make a careful study of the great Basilica. The many photographic illustrations too with which you have enriched it will make it welcome not only to

showed that I considered it doubtful (see page 298). In the II Ed. of the same work (1909) p. 298, I preferred the interpretation now given by Monsignor Wilpert, but the printer omitted to add after the words « Le martyre de Ste. Catherine » the words « d'après le P. Mullooly ». I notice with interest that you think it possible that two frescoes were painted at different dates on this wall; and perhaps the martyrdom of S. Catherine formed the subject of one of them.

those who have already visited or intend to visit S. Clemente, but to everybody interested in Christian art and archaeology.

In conclusion, I earnestly hope that the efforts of the energetic Committee dealing with the question of removing the water from the lowest portions of S. Clemente, including the *Dominicum Clementis* and the Mithraic *spelaeum* inaccessible for so many years, will soon be crowned with success<sup>1</sup>.

Once more let me congratulate you most heartily on the excellent work which you have produced.

Believe me, dear Fr. Nolan,

Yours devotedly

HORACE MARUCCHI.

*Rome, 21 February 1910.*

<sup>1</sup> That difficulty has now been solved by His Eminence Cardinal O'Connell Archbishop of Boston and Cardinal Titular of S. Clemente — See Third Part of this work (II edition).



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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

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*(to Second Edition).*

In our preface to the first edition of this work we said that our main object in publishing the book was to give to the public as concise and accurate an account of the Basilica of S. Clemente as our sources of reliable information permitted. Naturally, it is the same motive that urges us to produce this edition, in the preparation of which we have been much helped by additional study and observation, and much encouraged by the great popularity with which the first edition, now exhausted, was received.

In this history of so unique a monument as S. Clemente — seated as it is upon the ruins of pagan antiquity and gathering within its folds the treasures of Christian art and archaeology for a period of nearly nineteen centuries —, we have endeavoured not only to explain these treasures taken in themselves, but also to shew them as parts of a great whole, a whole which bears living witness to the teaching of the Church from the Apostolic times down through the ages to our own day.

We wish to thank Mr. Anderson for the kindness with which he prepared for us many of the photographs reproduced in this work.

L. N.

*S. Clemente, Rome.*

Feast of S. Thomas of Aquin.

7 March 1914.





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# THE BASILICA OF S. CLEMENTE

IN ROME

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## HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

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The Basilica of S. Clemente, situated in the Via S. Giovanni between the Coliseum and S. John Lateran's, may be said without fear of exaggeration or contradiction to be one of the most remarkable, one of the most ancient, and one of the most important in the Eternal City.

S. Clement, Pope and Martyr, to whom the church is dedicated, belonged to a noble family, probably to the Imperial family of the Flavians. According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, his father whose name was Faustus or Faustinus lived in the Cœlian Region. Clement was baptised, and ordained Deacon and Priest, and even consecrated Bishop, by S. Peter whose third successor <sup>1</sup> he became in the Apostolic See. He is appar-

<sup>1</sup> We shall speak in the Second Part of this work of Pope S. Clement's place in the order of Apostolic succession.

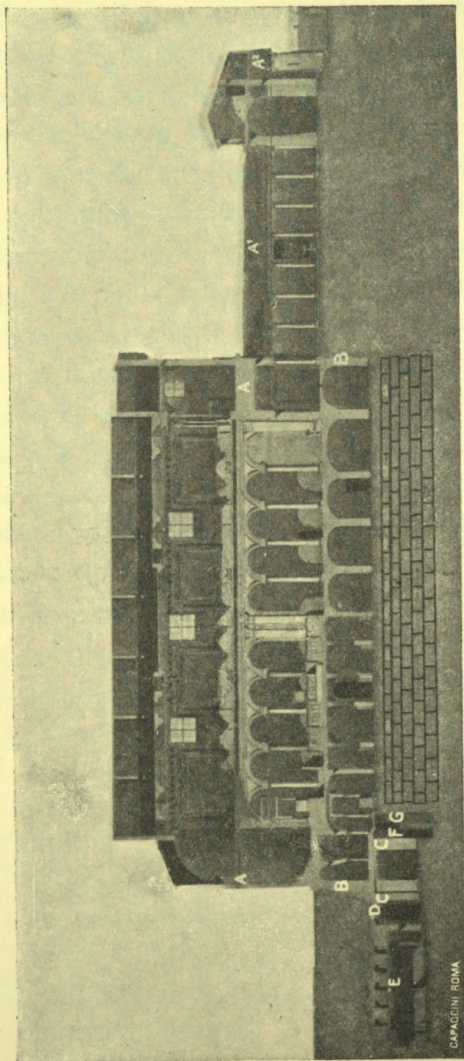
ently the « Fellow-labourer » to whom S. Paul alludes (Philip. IV, 3). The very first document belonging to Christian history outside the pages of Sacred Scripture was written by Pope S. Clement. In his *Epistle to the Corinthians* Clement speaks, even in the lifetime of the Apostle S. John, in the name of the Church of Rome, and in it he manifests the Supreme Authority vested in her by her Divine Head. This Letter, which S. Irenaeus styles « most forcible » and « efficacious », was written to the Corinthians to heal the wounds inflicted by schism and strife with which they were then afflicted. Clement was banished by the Emperor Trajan and condemned to work in the marble quarries in the Crimea where, according to his *Acts* <sup>1</sup>, he suffered martyrdom by being cast with an anchor round his neck into the Black Sea, about the year 100. While his tomb was in the Crimea a *Memoria* was erected to him in his own house at Rome where the Christians held their reunions. Of this house or *Dominicum Clementis* <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Regarding S. Clement we have authentic and legendary documents. To the former belongs his *Letter to the Corinthians* (published by Patritius Junius, Oxford. 1633, by Bryennios, 1876, by Lightfoot, and others). To the latter belong the *Recognitiones*, the *Pseudo-Clementinae*, and the *Acts*. The *Recognitiones* are mentioned by Origin at the beginning of the third century; and the *Acts* were compiled in the sixth or seventh century. When referring to the legendary literature we do not intend to attach more importance to it than is due to legends.

<sup>2</sup> See note p. 21.







Section shewing the various stratifications in S. Clemente.

- AA. Present Basilica.  
 A1. Atrium of Present Basilica.  
 A2. Entrance to Atrium.  
 BB. Fourth century Basilica.  
 CC. *Dominicum Clementis* (I. century).

- D. Ambulacrum.  
 E. Temple of Mithras.  
 F. Wall of Imperial Period.  
 G. Wall of Republican or Kingly Period.

we shall speak in detail in the third part of this book. The relics of S. Clement were brought to Rome in 867 by SS. Cyril and Methodius and deposited in the Basilica erected in the fourth century over the *Dominicum*. The feast of the Saint is solemnly celebrated at S. Clemente, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November.

The present church was for centuries identified in the minds even of the learned with the primitive basilica of the fourth century. Archæologists up to the middle of the nineteenth century believed that in part it retained the primitive form, and regarded it as the perfect type of a Constantinian Basilica. They were right in believing it to have the primitive form and type, but they erred in thinking that it was itself either the ancient church, or that it stood upon its site. They little suspected what treasures lay hidden beneath the church they admired, until the labours of one, whose antiquarian ardour and archæological genius made him a worthy contemporary and intimate friend of the great De Rossi, brought to light, after nearly eight centuries of oblivion, monuments which carry us back not only to the fourth century, but to the days of S. Clement himself and of the Apostles, nay even to centuries before the Christian era.

After years of study and investigation, and of conjecture which with time ripened into conviction that the present beautiful church of S. Clemente was not



the ancient basilica so frequently mentioned in early history, Fr. Mullooly, Prior of the Irish Dominicans in Rome, began those researches which so successfully resulted in giving back to the world the Subterranean Basilica with its walls of the age of Constantine; the Mithraic Cave of the second or third century; the stuccoed *Memoria* or *Dominicum Clementis* of the first century; and, lastly, the massive tufa construction which belongs to the days of Tarquin the Proud, or perhaps even to those of Servius Tullius. Thus within the precincts of S. Clemente we have an important and almost unique example of monumental stratification. We shall, then, begin with the present church and thus, working downwards, shall deal with each of the periods in order.







## FIRST PART

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### THE PRESENT CHURCH

---

In determining the date of the present church we get little assistance from books ; but it has been aptly said that « the stones of Rome have a voice and speak ». To them therefore we turn in **Date.** order to hear what they have to tell us in their own cold but significant way. A slab discovered by Fr. Mullooly in the pavement of the subterranean church and now affixed to one of the walls there bears an inscription with the names of Popes Gregory VI. and Nicholas II. who began their respective Pontificates in 1044 and 1059, while an inscription on the marble episcopal throne in the apse of the present church tells us that the work (of the building of the church) was begun and completed by Cardinal Anastatius, Titular of the church.

Pavinius also tells us that Cardinal Anastatius built the church of S. Clemente, and that he died in 1125<sup>1</sup>. The ancient church, therefore, must have been destroyed, and the present one erected between the years 1059 and 1125. In the year 1084 this part of Rome was laid waste by the soldiers of Robert Guiscard, when he entered the Eternal City to relieve Pope Gregory VII. (Hildebrand), then being besieged, in the Castle of S. Angelo, by the German Emperor, Henry IV. Guiscard, to effect his purpose, set fire to the City; and, we are told, the conflagration was so great that the flames swept everything away, from the Lateran to the Flaminian Gate<sup>2</sup>. The ancient church of S. Clemente must have been involved in

<sup>1</sup> According to Pavinius, Cardinal Anastatius was buried in S. Clemente. A slab, now in the Capitoline Museum — Hall of inscriptions at the left of entrance — seems, from the inscription which it bears, to have covered the tomb of a certain Peter to whom Anastatius entrusted the building of the Basilica, and who seems to have been also buried in S. Clemente. Prof. Lanciani (« Destruction of Ancient Rome » p. 126) says: « The reconstruction of S. Clemente was undertaken, after the withdrawal of Robert Guiscard, by Cardinal Anastatius, who died in 1126, or 1128, leaving the completion of the work to Cardinal Pietro Pisano ».

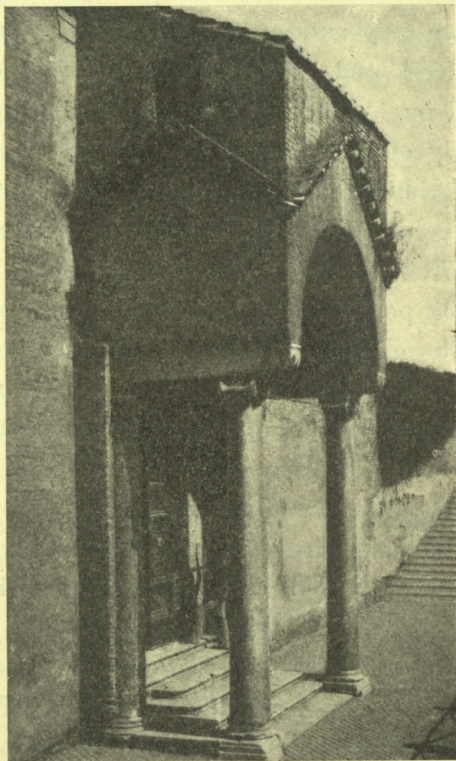
<sup>2</sup> During our excavations this year for the draining of S. Clemente (to be referred to later on) we found, at a depth of thirty feet below the surface of the present Via Labicana, a quantity of charred wood mixed up with blackened mortar and brick — traces, no doubt, of the Guiscard fire.

this destruction. But in 1099 Pope Paschal II. was elected in the conclave held in S. Clemente. If we assume that this election took place in the present church, we may assign its erection to the period between 1084 and 1099. The church was certainly completed by 1128, for its dedication took place on the 26 May of that year.

The primitive arrangements of a Christian Basilica have been faithfully reproduced in the present church. First, it has an atrium, or courtyard surrounded by porticoes. This atrium, which intervenes between the church and the street, is entered by a doorway overhung by a *propylon* or ante-porch, constructed in the form of a projecting arch which rests on four marble columns, two of which are engaged to the wall and two standing free from it. The *propylon* of S. Clemente which dates from about the year 1100 is one of the finest existing specimens of its kind. In the middle of the atrium is a *cantharus* or fountain, emblematic of that living water of the Scriptures which springeth up unto life everlasting. The quadrangular atrium which, from the fourth to the seventh century, served for liturgical purposes, namely for the divisions of catechumens and penitents, is really not a necessary adjunct of the eleventh century basilica, but rather the preservation of an interesting page of the history of the discipline of the



early Church. Our atrium of S. Clemente, in so far as it is quadriporticoed, enjoys the honour of being

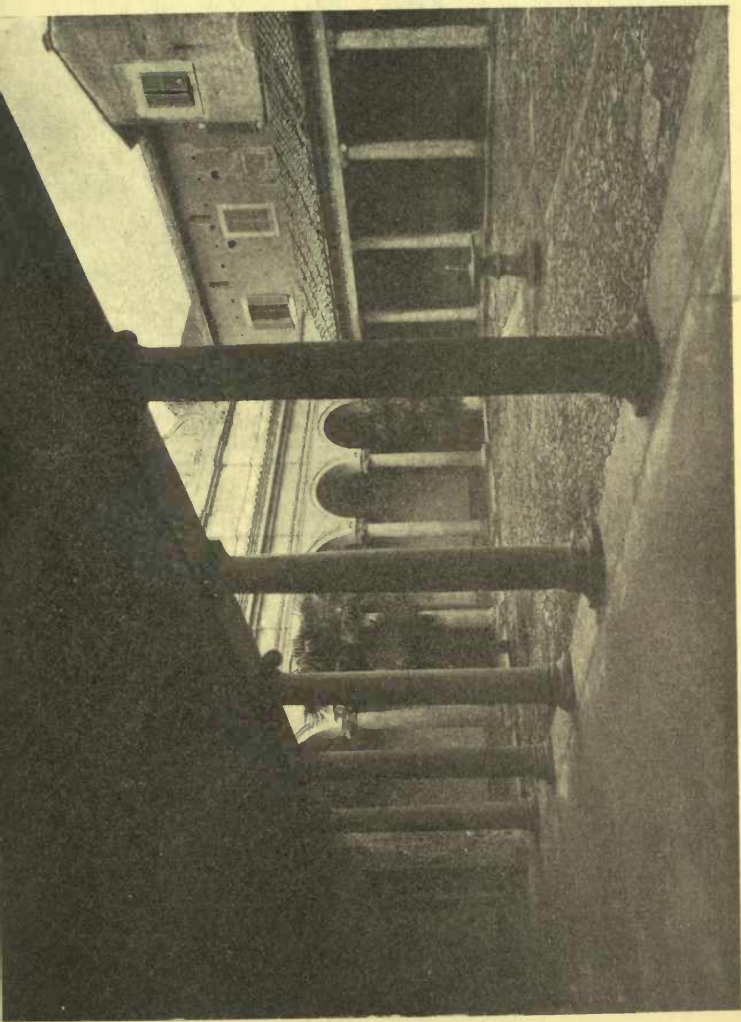


(fot. Anderson)

Propylon of Atrium of S. Clemente (c. 1100).

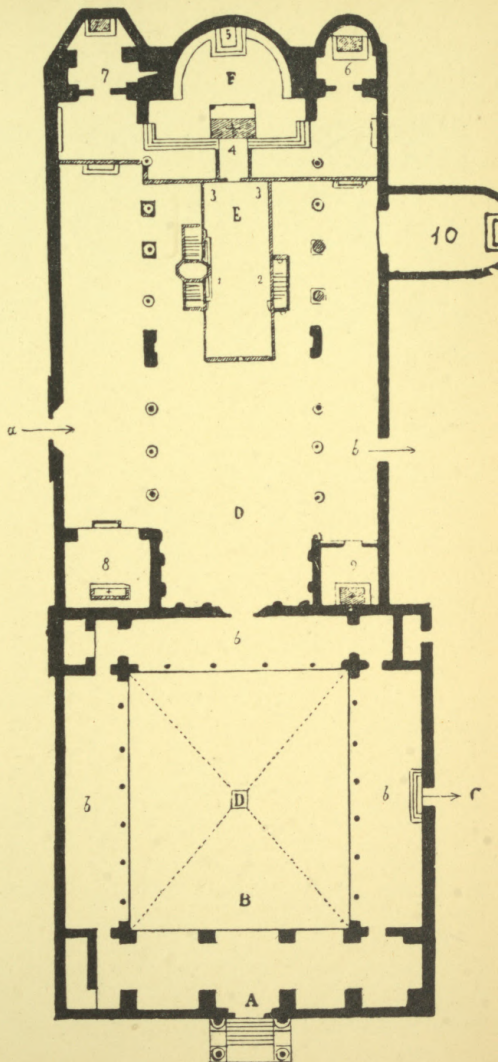
unique, as it is the only one of its kind that has survived the wreck of ages.



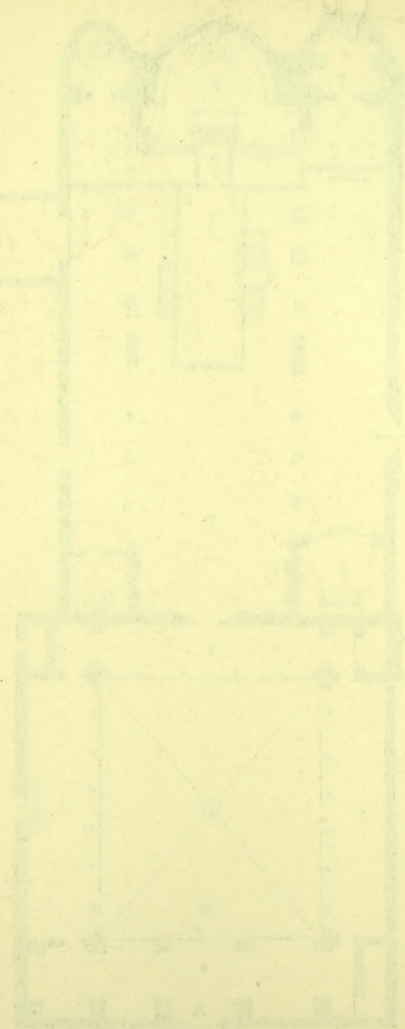




- A. Entrance to Atrium  
 B. Atrium.  
 bbb. Quadriporticus.  
 C. Entrance to Convent.  
 [D] Fountain in Atrium.  
 D. Nave.  
 E. Choir.  
 1. 2. Ambones.  
 3. Marble Screen.  
 4. High Altar.  
 F. Presbytery and Tri-  
 bune.  
 5. Episcopal Throne.  
 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. Chapels of  
 SS. John, B. Sacrament,  
 S. Catherine of Alexandria,  
 S. Dominic, and SS. Cyril  
 and Methodius.  
 a. Side entrance to the  
 church from the Via S. Gio-  
 vanni.  
 b. Entrance to the Sa-  
 ceristy and Subterranean  
 Basilica.



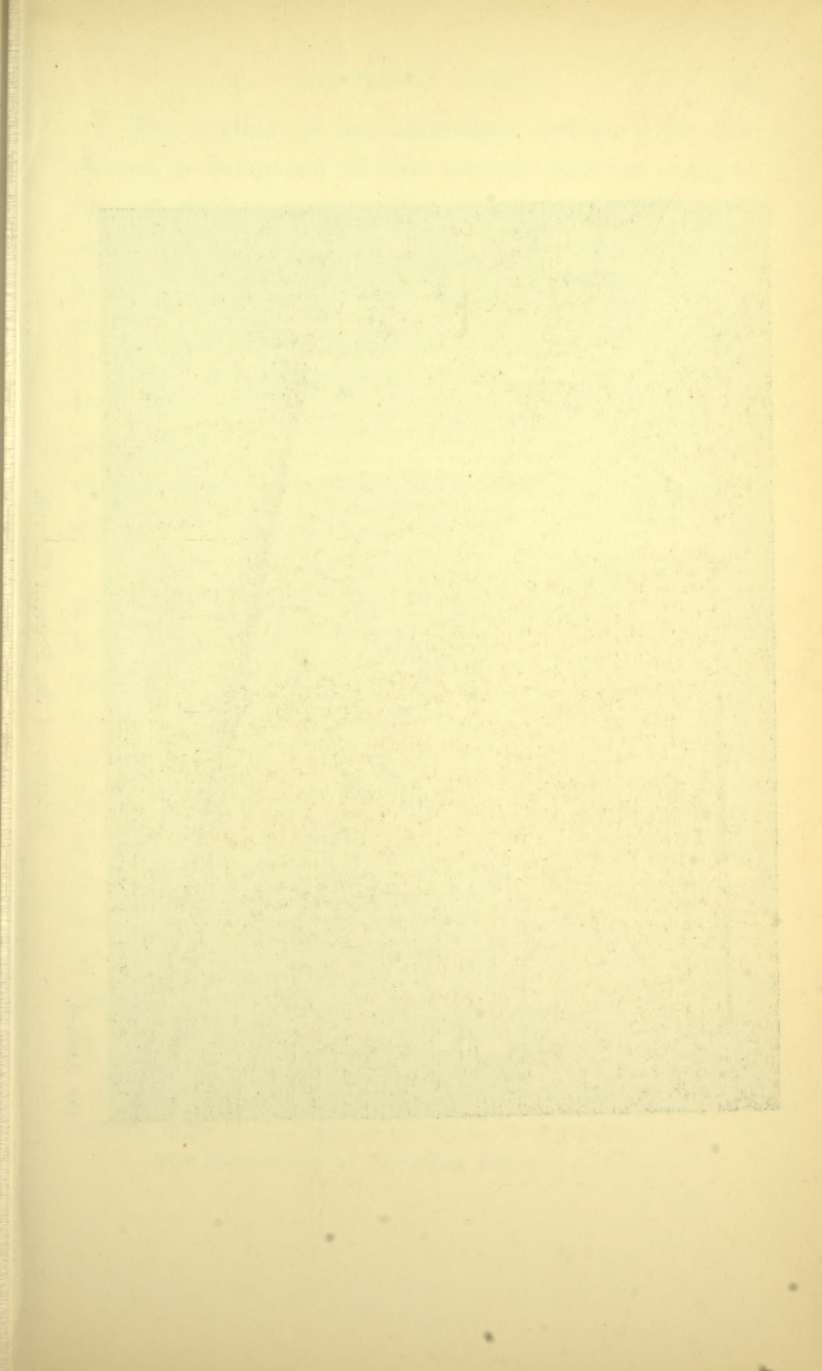
Ground plan of Atrium and of present Basilica

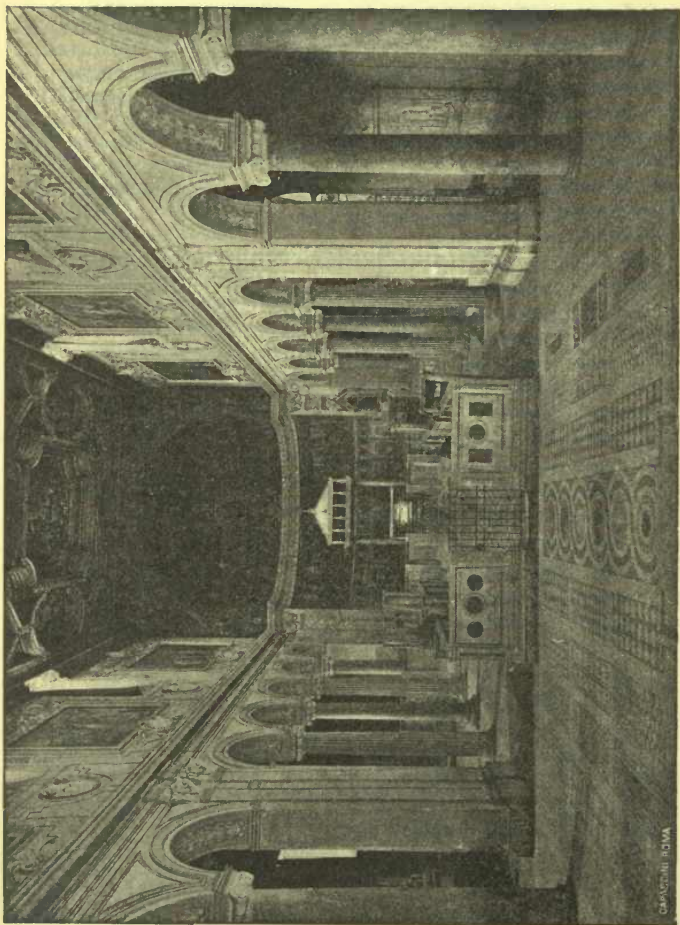


1. Entrance to the  
 2. Hall  
 3. Dining Room  
 4. Kitchen  
 5. Parlor  
 6. Library  
 7. Study  
 8. Bed Room  
 9. Bath  
 10. Dressing Room  
 11. Closets  
 12. Porch  
 13. Terrace  
 14. Garden  
 15. Driveway  
 16. Garage  
 17. Stable  
 18. Barn  
 19. Outbuildings  
 20. Fences

Ground plan of the house and its various buildings.







CHIESA DI S. MARIA

(fot. Alinari).

Interior of the Present Church.

The portico at the immediate entrance to the church is composed of four antique columns sustaining an arched canopy; the lateral porticoes are architraved. Three of the columns of the façade portico are of granite, and one of *cipollino*, two having Corinthian and two Ionic capitals. The church consists of a nave and two aisles; the nave being divided from the aisle on either side by eight columns and a pier, five of the columns are of Parian marble, four of which are fluted; five of Numidian; three of *granitello*; two of oriental granite: and one of *bigio*.

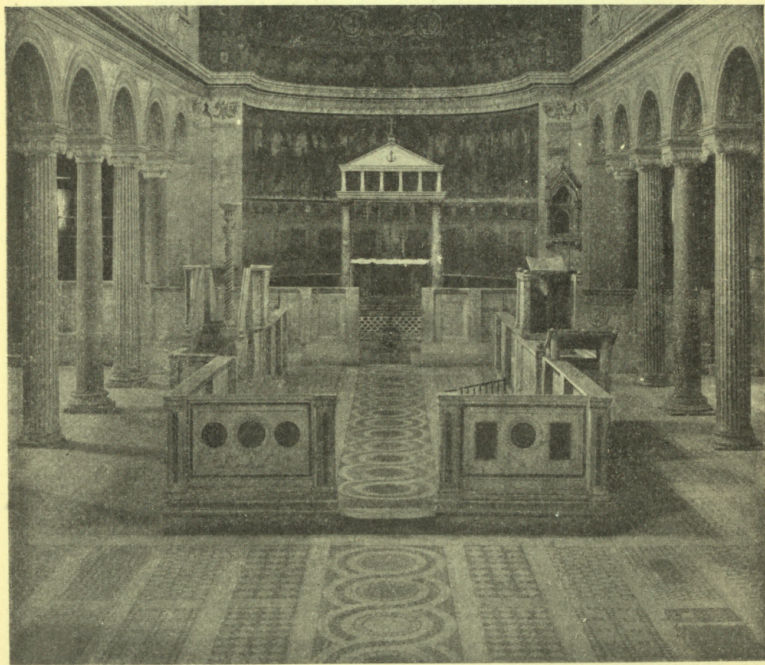
On entering the church from the cloister by the great or principal door<sup>1</sup> the eye is at once arrested by the beautiful pavement of the style known as *opus sectile* comprising various patterns. This style, it would seem, is the result of a blending of the best elements of the Byzantine and early Roman schools. « In no school of Christian art », says Prof. A. L. Frothingham,<sup>2</sup> “are the pavements of such importance as in the Roman. Nowhere else in an early Christian or mediaeval church does the eye instinctively seek the ground for a design and material that shall harmonize with and enrich the effect of the interior.” This is certainly true in the case of S. Clemente.

<sup>1</sup> The door now used by the public is that on the Via S. Giovanni; it was opened by Sixtus V (1585-90).

<sup>2</sup> « The Monuments of Christian Rome », p. 171.



Then the choir or *Schola cantorum* with its graceful spiral Paschal candlestick inlaid with mosaic, and its elevated ambones, *Schola cantorum*.



(fot. Comm. C. Tenerani).

Section of church shewing mosaic pavement and choir.

all brought from the lower church, attract attention. In the possession of its original « Schola Cantorum », S. Clemente again stands unique, for here alone did the spirit of the Renaissance respect the



ancient liturgical choir. The great marble panels of the choir are decorated with carved wreaths, crosses, and one conspicuous monogram frequently repeated. On the jambs or piers between the panels are engraved the fish, the dove, and the vine-branch, so familiar to the visitor to the catacombs, and symbolising respectively Christ, peace, and the holy Eucharist. The marble panel at either side of the entrance to the choir is enriched with mosaics at the expense of the monogram which once adorned it. The author of the monogram referred to apparently did not foresee the puzzle that he was setting to archaeologists in ages many centuries removed from his own, or he would have left his name more legibly written. However, guesses have been made by different authorities, and supported by more or less cogent arguments, in favour, now of Nicholas I. (858-867), now of John VIII. (872-882), and, finally, of John II. (532-535) who seems to have the greatest claim to be regarded as the author of the monogram in question. In determining the name of him to whom the monogram refers, we are fixing the date of the erection of the choir; hence the interest attaching to the solution of the difficulty. The great argument in favour of John II. is the existence of an inscription on one of the marble beams under

the panels to the west of the Gospel ambo which runs as follows:

ALTARE TIBI  $\overline{DS}$  SALVO HORMISDA PAPA †  
MERCURIUS  $\overline{PB}$  CUM SOCIIS OFFERT.

*In the Pontificate of Pope Hormisdas, Mercurius the Priest with his companions offers an altar to Thee O God.*

Also on the capital of one of the exquisitely sculptured pillars that decorate the monument of Cardinal Venerio near the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, is another inscription, which reads thus:

† SERBUS DOMINI MERCURIUS  $\overline{PB}$  †  
 $\overline{SCE}$  ECCESIAE CATHOLICAE OFF.<sup>1</sup>

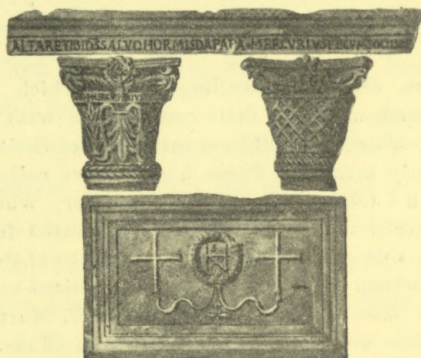
It is believed that these pillars at one time supported the Ciborium or baldacchino which the Priest Mercurius with his colleagues had erected, and that the ciborium and altar stood in the lower church. Pope

<sup>1</sup> Since the Mss. of this work have been sent to press, we have found embedded in the floor of the Oratory of S. Clemente in the course of the excavations recently resumed there, a fragment of sculptured marble with the following parts of an inscription.

. . . RIUS CL . . .  
. . . . TER.

No doubt the three words of which these fragments of inscription formed part are: mercuRIUS CLe mentis presbyTER. Hence we have in this further evidence of Cardinal Mercurius' care for his Titular Church; but we cannot yet say whether the work to which the above inscription refers was executed in the Oratory itself, or in the basilica overhead.

S. Hormisdas governed the church from 514 to 523, and Mercurius who was Cardinal Priest of S. Clemente was elected Pope in 532, taking the name of John II.



We learn of his election to the Papacy from a celebrated inscription in the church of S. Pietro in Vincoli:

JOANNES COGNOMENTO MERCURIUS EX SAN-  
CTAE ECCLESIAE ROMANAE PRESBYTERIS  
ORDINATUS EX TITULO<sup>1</sup> SANCTI CLEMENTIS  
AD GLORIAM PONTIFICALEM PROMOTUS.

<sup>1</sup> How the term « title » came to be applied to churches, it is difficult to say. We know (Gen. XXVIII. 18) that Jacob set up a stone for a Title in the holy place where he had the vision; but the first Christians did not call their meeting places « titles ». They held their assemblies in private houses; such was the Cenacle at Jerusalem, and the other places of reunion mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (I. 13, X. 9, XX. 8); hence it is that ancient oratories were called « Domestic Churches » (*Ecclesiae Domesticae*). Subsequently the places of sacred



John II therefore seems to be the person whose monogram decorates the marble screen of which the classical style agrees, according to experts, far better with the sixth than with the ninth century, the period

worship were ordinary dwelling-houses which were well adapted for such use from their construction with atrium, trichlinium, etc., where the different categories of christians might be conveniently arranged. These houses were called « Houses of the Church » (*Domus Ecclesiae*), and, later, when the part allotted to sacred worship proper was separated from the rest of the house, this part was called the « House of God » (*Domus Dei*) or *Dominicum*, the place where the christians met the Lord, such was the *Dominicum Clementis* (See Prof. Marucchi, *Basiliques et Églises de Rome*, pp. 9-13, and Mons. Duchesne *Origines du Culte Chrétien*, ch. XI.). At the beginning of the second century, Pope Evaristus (112-121) established Titles, that is, he divided Rome into Parishes, to the churches of which he gave the name of Title. In the fifth century, we find the first authentic list of the Roman Titles of which there were then twenty-five, S. Clemente being one of them. It is even probable that the Title of S. Clemente, that is the « *Dominicum Clementis* », was established by Pope Evaristus. In 449, Pope S. Leo the Great sent the Priest Rene of the « title » of S. Clemente to represent him at the Council of Ephesus (Hefele, *Histoire des Conciles*, t. II. p. 560). Each Title was served by a regularly organized body of clergy of whom the first Priest was styled Titular, and the others his *Socii* or companions, for instance « Mercurius and his companions ». Today the Titles of the Basilicas in Rome correspond with those of the Sacred College, namely Cardinal Priest and Cardinal Deacon. The Basilica of S. Clemente has the Title of Cardinal Priest, and can have as Titular only a Cardinal of that rank in the Sacred College.



of the other claimants. Moreover the fact of John II having erected an altar in S. Clemente while Titular of the church makes it very possible that he would, during his Pontificate, take a special interest in this basilica, and complete the work which he began as Cardinal. The choir, then, would have been erected between 532 and 535.

On the left side of the choir is the Gospel Ambo with its double staircase; on the right is that of the Epistle, and the Lectern from which, facing eastwards, are read the Lessons or Prophecies of the Old Testament on the feast of Christmas, on Holy Saturday, the Vigil of Pentecost, the Saturday before Trinity Sunday, etc. In the possession of this Lectern or third Ambo the choir of S. Clemente is almost unique.

Ambo from ἀναβαίνειν, « to ascend », called also Pulpitum, Tribunal etc. The Ambo seems to have come into use early in the history of the Church. The Council of Laodicea (371) forbade anyone to Ambo. chant or recite who was not qualified to ascend the Ambo. S. Ambrose and S. John Chrysostom are known to have preached from Ambos. S. Cyprian speaks of the Gospel being read from the Ambo, so do the Liturgy of S. Basil, the Milan Missal, and the Roman Ordo; while the Clementine Liturgy says that from the Ambo the Deacon dismissed the Catechumens <sup>1</sup>.

Brightman, t. I. pag. 3.

The Ambos of S. Clemente, S. Laurence outside the Walls, S. Maria in Cosmedin, and S. Pancratius are the most ancient in Rome. Pope Benedict XIII. preached from the Gospel Ambo in S. Clemente. The Ambos of S. Clemente are used today for the same purpose and in the same manner as they were fourteen centuries ago, thus testifying to the uniformity of the Catholic Church throughout the course of ages.

As we pass through the choir on our way to the High Altar our attention is attracted by two beautiful

Transennae or lattice-work screens. There

are three such panels in the choir; but we doubt if they are in their proper place, for we should rather think that these Transennae were placed in front of the relics of the martyrs under the altar in the lower church and are thus sometimes referred to as « fenestellae confessionis », or openings in the « Confessio », through which pilgrims could behold and touch the tombs of the martyrs.



## High Altar.

We have now reached the « Confession », and the High Altar raised over the relics of S. Clement Pope and

Martyr; and of S. Ignatius, Martyr Bishop of Antioch. Of S. Clement we have already spoken.

S. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch in Syria, was condemned to death by Trajan about the year 107. He was brought to Rome and exposed to wild beasts in the arena of the Coliseum where he was devoured by lions, nothing of him being left but the larger bones which were devoutly gathered up and carried in triumph to Antioch. That city fell into the power of the Saracens in 637, and the relics of the Martyr were brought back to Rome and deposited in S. Clemente. His feast is solemnly celebrated in this church on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February. Tradition says that Ignatius was the little child whom the Saviour took and placed before the Apostles (S. Matt. XVIII. 2) when he exhorted them to be as little children. S. Ignatius was a disciple of the Apostles, and the author of an epistle addressed to the Roman Church, on which he bestows the title of « President of the Society of Love ». By this epistle he announces to the Christians at Rome his coming thither as a Christian confessor condemned to death; and in his exhortation and instruction to them he says: « But not as Peter and Paul do I command you; they were Apostles, I am but a captive of Christ ». S. Ignatius here alludes to the preaching and teaching of the Princes of the Apostles in Rome.



The celebrant of the Mass at the High Altar faces the east, that is, he looks towards the principal door of the church. Over the Altar, supported by four *pavonazetto* columns, rises the *baldacchino* or *ciborio*, so called because from its roof was suspended the dove-shaped golden or silver vase containing the Blessed Sacrament, the *cibus* or food of life. The chain, or at least part of it, from which the Dove was suspended, as well as the rods and rings which carried the veils that surrounded the altar and sacred vessel are still *in situ*. The Blessed Sacrament was not preserved in Tabernacles, such as we have today, before the first half of the sixteenth century, and we owe their introduction to the zeal and piety of a holy Dominican, Fr. Thomas Stella, who founded the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament in 1539, one of the objects of which Confraternity was to provide in the churches where it was established a becoming habitation for the God of the holy Eucharist.

The anchor, is represented on the tympanum of the *baldacchino* and in front of the altar-reliquary<sup>1</sup>.

The harmonious proportions existing between the

<sup>1</sup> It is believed that S. Clement instituted the « Apostolic Notaries » on whose seal the anchor is represented.



High Altar and the arch of the Apse are so exquisite that no one can fail to notice and admire them.



## The apse.

In the centre of the apse is the episcopal throne proper to the Cardinal Titular who alone may use it. This is the chair bearing the inscription alluded to and which runs thus:

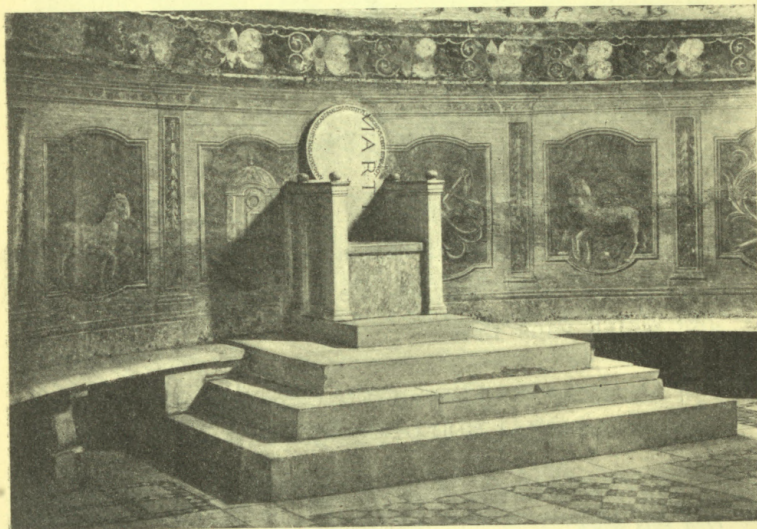
† ANASTATIUS PRESBITER CARDINALIS  
HUIUS TITULI HOC OPUS CEPIT ET PERFECIT.

*Anastasius Cardinal Priest of this Title began and completed this work.*

On the wall over the seats of the priests are painted the Saviour and the Blessed Virgin surrounded by the Apostles who are separated from one another by palm trees. This is believed to be the work of Giovenale da Celano (1400).

We have now come to the most important monument in the Basilica, the beautiful mosaic of the apse. Among archaeologists there is a difference of opinion with regard to its date. Some believe it to belong

to the beginning of the fourteenth century, and, from the perfection of the work, think that it must have been executed by Giotto. Others refer it to the year



(fot. Anderson).

Episcopal Throne.

1299, basing their reason for so doing on the inscription over the little Gothic tabernacle in the apse; but this tabernacle has no connection with the mosaic composition of the apse, nor does the inscription give any hint to that effect. Others, again, hold that the work belongs to the early part of the twelfth century, and to have been done under Pope Paschal II.

(1099 - 1118), whose election to the Apostolic See took place in S. Clemente. Recent scientific examination of the mosaic decoration seems to confirm this opinion, which is held by Professor Marucchi, who says that the Pope probably wished to commemorate and perpetuate in this apse the triumph of the Crusaders in the conquest of Jerusalem in 1099.<sup>1</sup> Monsignor Wilpert, who has made a special study of this subject, also believes that the decoration of the apse was completed before the dedication of the church in 1128.<sup>2</sup> Speaking of this apse, Professor A. L. Frothingham says: « And yet, in a few years, still under Paschal II, the apse of S. Clemente was produced, a work which in its essentials is based on old Roman traditions, and in its technique is almost perfect. In its general design it figures the vine, representing the redeemed Church, whose spirals cover the apse, and Christ the Redeemer on the Cross in the centre; the main difference between this and the early Christian interpretation of the scene being the substitution of the human figure for the lamb on the Cross. The earthly Paradise and the river Jordan at the base, with their

<sup>1</sup> « Un Ricordo della Prima Crociata, in Roma ».

<sup>2</sup> We are aware that Monsignor Wilpert in his great work on the Art of the Middle Ages (soon to be published) is dealing specially with this subject.



abundance of animal and symbolic life are purely classic in idea and even in technique, whereas the little figures of mediaeval creation that are interwoven in the spirals are of heavy Romanesque type. Only on the face of the apse, where the large figures of SS. Peter and Paul, SS. Clement and Lawrence, loom up in distinct contrast, do we see a touch of Byzantine influence in their being seated instead of standing ».<sup>1</sup>

Above the arch of the apse is the bust of our Saviour represented with a book in His left hand, while His right is raised in the act of blessing. The four Evangelists are represented by their respective emblems<sup>2</sup>; SS. Matthew and Mark are on the right of the Saviour, and on the left SS. John and Luke. To the left of the arch is S. Peter (AGIOS PETRUS) instructing S. Clement:

RESPICE PROMISSUM CLEMENS A ME TIBI XUM.

*Clement behold Christ promised by me to you.*

S. Clement is represented with his feet on a boat around which fish are swimming. This obviously al-

<sup>1</sup> « The Monuments of Christian Rome » p. 320.

<sup>2</sup> Ezechiel. chap. I. v. 10 — « And as for the likeness of their faces; there was the face of a man and the face of a lion on the right side of all the four; and the face of an ox, on the left side of all the four; and the face of an eagle over all the four ».





(fot. Anderson).

Apse of the Present Church.



ludes to the manner of his martyrdom. On the right of the arch is S. Paul (AGIOS PAULUS) familiarly teaching S. Laurence regarding the Cross:

DE CRUCE LAURENTI PAULO FAMULARE DOCENTI.

S. Laurence is represented with a Cross in his left hand and with his feet on a gridiron under which a fire is burning, S. Laurence having suffered martyrdom by being roasted on a gridiron, about the year 253. Again on the left, below S. Peter, is Jeremias holding in his hand the scroll of his secretary, Baruch :

HIC EST D<sup>S</sup> NOSTER ET N<sup>o</sup>. ESTIMABITUR  
ALIUS ABSQ<sup>ue</sup>. ILLO. <sup>1</sup>

*This is our Lord and no other shall be accounted of in comparison with him.*

Below Jeremias is Jerusalem. Under S. Paul, on the other side, is Isaias with the inscription :

VIDI DOMINUM SEDENTEM SUP. SOLIUM. <sup>2</sup>

*I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne.*

Below Isaias is Bethlehem.

A border runs round the apse with the inscription :

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO SEDENTI SUP.  
THRONUM ET IN TERRA PAX HOMINIBUS  
BONAE VOLUNTATIS.

*Glory be to God on high sitting upon a throne, and on earth peace to men of good will.*

<sup>1</sup> Baruch, III, 36.

<sup>2</sup> Isaias, VI, 1.




Along the hemicycle over the lambs is inscribed :

ECCLESIAM CHRISTI VITI SIMILABIMUS ISTI †  
DE LIGNO CRUCIS JACOBI DENS, IGNATHIQ. IN-  
SUPRA SCRIPTI REQUIESCUNT CORPORE CHRI-  
STI † QUAM LEX ARENTEM, SED CRUX FACIT  
ESSE VIRENTEM.

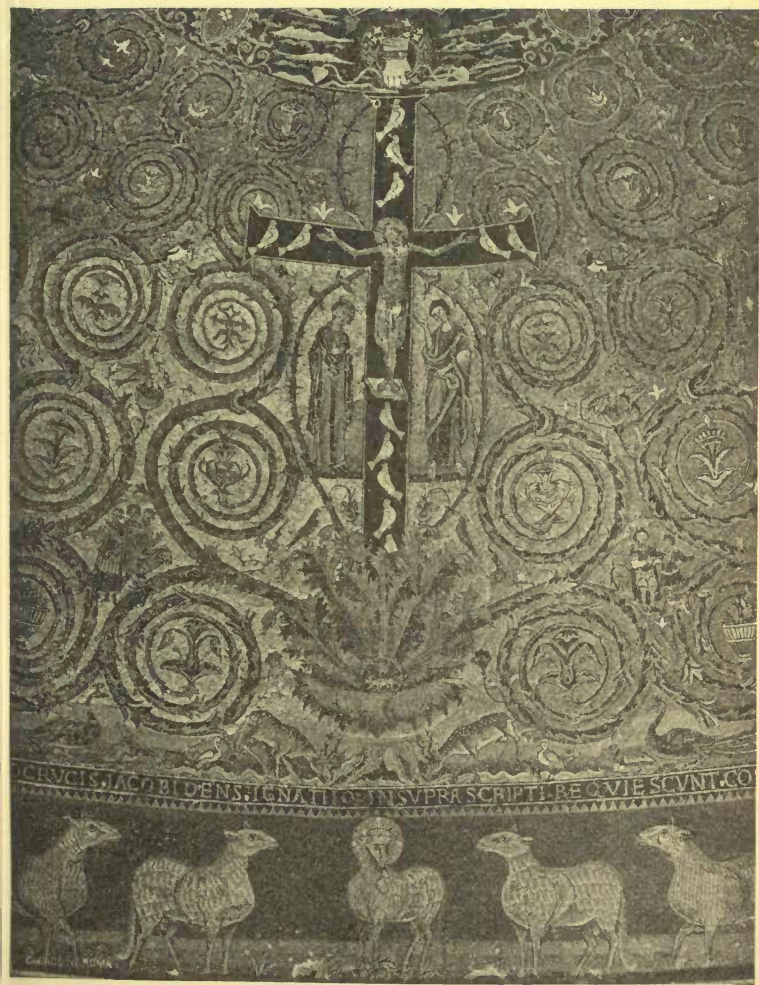
which, freely translated, means :

*The Church of Christ we liken to that vine,  
Which the Law parched but the Cross makes green to shine.  
Of the wood of Christ, of James a tooth, and of Ignace  
In the body of this Christ have found a resting place.*

The representation of the Cross raised up in the apse for adoration excited still further the devotion of the faithful from the fact that a portion of the True Cross was contained in it. The union too of our divine Lord with His saints, and of His Passion with theirs, was forcibly represented by placing a relic of an Apostle and of the Martyr Bishop of Antioch with the True Cross in the Crucifix itself.

A broad border runs round the inner edge of the concave portion. The ornamentation of this border consists of rich fruitful vines and ears of corn which spring from a vase at either end and rise together towards the Constantinian monogram of Christ A  ω in the centre. The grapes and ears of corn are symbolic of the Eucharistic species. Below the monogram a string of beads is suspended, and below this again is a wavy iridescent circle indicating, it is said, the opening





(fot. Anderson).

The Triumph of the Cross.



of the heavens ; from it stretches forth a hand holding a wreath emblematic of Omnipotence<sup>1</sup>. The Cross, the great centre piece of the whole, let down as it were from the hand of the Almighty, takes root upon the earth and rising from amidst wondrous foliage spreads itself abroad as the mystic vine in bold and graceful curved lines over the whole area of the hemicycle. The Saviour of the world hangs fastened by four nails to the Cross beside which stand the Blessed Virgin and the Beloved Disciple. On the four extremities of the Cross are twelve doves, symbols of the Apostles. A little hart is feeding at the foot of the Cross ; it is symbolic of the baptized, and is regarded as hostile to the serpent which, according to an old popular belief, it ate with impunity<sup>2</sup>. The serpent, too, is there amidst the foliage from beneath which are gushing out four streams of water symbolising the four rivers which flowed through Paradise. From them two thirsty stags are drinking ; they represent the desire of the faithful to be united with God : « Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontem aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea

<sup>1</sup> This portion of the apse corresponds exactly in design with the same section of the apse of S. Maria in Trastevere, the church from which S. Dominic transferred the first colony of nuns which he established at S. Sisto Vecchio, in the Apian Way.

<sup>2</sup> See Aringhi, *Roma Sotterr.*, I., p. 381.



ad Te, Deus » (Ps. XLI., V. I.) « As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee O God ».

In the waters of the stream behind the stags are pelicans, and behind these again are the peacocks of the Catacombs, symbols of immortality. On either side where the rivers are swallowed up by the earth, the Good Shepherd is feeding his sheep. In a line with the foot of the Cross are the four great Doctors of the Church with the name of each inscribed beside him. On the right SS. Ambrose and Gregory, and on the left SS. Jerome and Augustine <sup>1</sup>. The lowest portion or horizontal band of the half dome is occupied by twelve lambs representing the twelve Apostles, while the Mystic Lamb, the Saviour of mankind, stands on a hill in the centre with a golden circle round His head. Towards Him all of them are turned. They are represented as passing between the two cities—Bethlehem and Jerusalem—symbolic respectively of the birth and death of the Divine Redeemer, and the Churches springing from the two Laws, the Old and the New ;

<sup>1</sup> Some authors of guide books positively state that these are four Dominicans. They do not know apparently that the names of the four Doctors are written underneath ; and perhaps erroneously think that S. Clemente belonged to the Dominicans at the time that the apse was decorated. It was not till 1667 that S. Clemente was handed over to the Dominicans.

Jerusalem signifying the Church of the Circumcision *Ecclesia ex Circumcisione*, the Church of the Jews ; and Bethlehem signifying that of the Gentiles, *Ecclesia ex Gentibus*. Over the arch of the gate of the city of Bethlehem is portrayed a child, the Divine Child we presume, while over the gate of the city of Jerusalem is represented a Cross, and on the steps a cock.

The artist fills every part of the graceful windings of the vine with an admirable variety of birds and flowers which, no doubt, are intended not for mere ornamentation but to teach by symbols. Thus terminates the work in which a great artistic genius has so vividly depicted for us in colours the most brilliant, and in execution the most successful, mosaic representation of the great mystery of our Redemption.



## Chapel of the B. Sacrament.

On the left of the apse is the Chapel of the Rosary, used now as the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament. This chapel, which was constructed in 1617 <sup>1</sup>, has an altar-piece by Conca (1676-1764), representing the Ma-

<sup>1</sup> See De Burgo, *Hibernia Dominicana*, p. 403. The chapel was first dedicated under the title of Our Lady's Nativity, and in 1715 was changed for that of Queen of the Rosary.

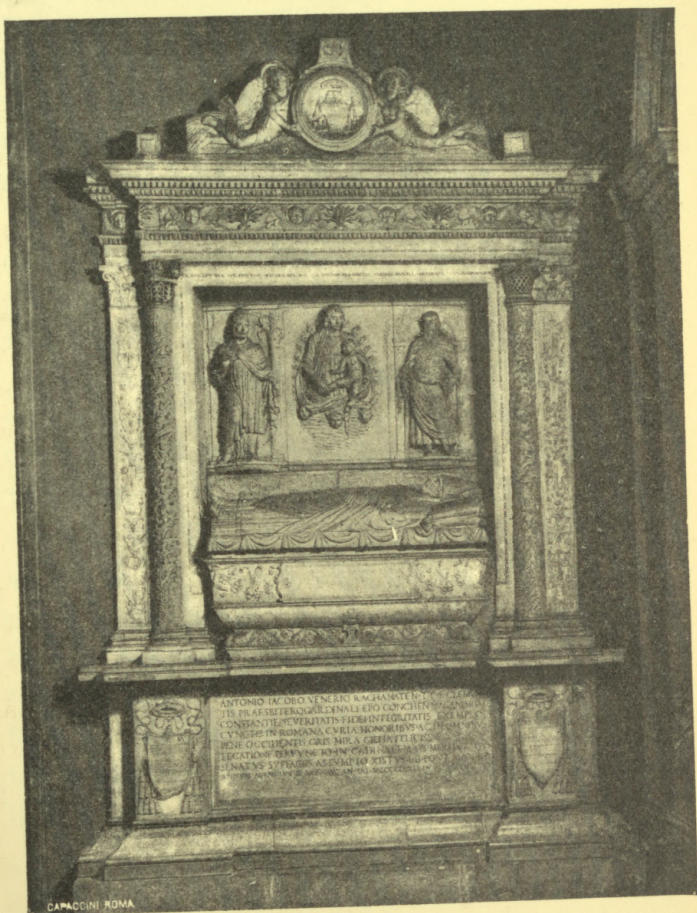
donna and Child giving Rosaries to S. Dominic and S. Catherine. The picture is well designed and admirably executed. On the left wall of the chapel is depicted S. Francis of Assisi receiving the Stigmata on Mount Alvernon; and on the right is S. Charles Borromeo distributing alms to the poor. Both pictures are the work of the school of Caracci (1555-1619). Over the entrance to the chapel are represented Isaias and Jeremias.

Outside the chapel, to the left, is the monument to Cardinal Venerio of Recanati who was created Cardinal by Sixtus IV with the Title of S. Clemente, and who died in 1479. Two beautiful pillars, one of which has been already referred to as containing the name of Cardinal Mercurius, adorn the monument. They are sculptured with vine-tendrils and with birds pecking at the grapes. The capitals are admirable specimens of fine pierced-work. It is believed that these pillars are two of the four which supported the *baldacchino* over the High Altar in the lower church; but where the other two are we cannot say, nor do we know where these two were during the period between the destruction of the lower church at the end of the eleventh century and the erection of the monument to Cardinal Venerio at the end of the fifteenth.

On a pilaster opposite this monument is a pleasing picture, by an unknown artist, of the Blessed Virgin







Monument to Cardinal Venerio.



and Child and S. John. The children are playing together and our Blessed Lady, kneeling with her hands joined, looks earnestly at them while angels are scattering roses over their heads. This picture was used as the altar-piece during the time that the chapel was dedicated to our Lady of the Nativity.

On the floor near the picture is the tomb of Cardinal Henry of S. Allosio who died in 1450. An inscription on a pilaster tells us who this illustrious Cardinal was.

Between the tomb of Cardinal Allosio and the monument of Cardinal Venerio is another tomb, that of Cardinal Francis Canali who was Bishop of Tivoli from 1820 to 1827. In 1834 he was created Cardinal with the Title of S. Clemente where he was buried on his death in 1835. During the excavations of the Subterranean church the coffin containing his remains was found interred in the débris. It is strange that the burial of this Cardinal and others in the actual filling-up material of the lower church gave no clue to or suggested no conjecture as to the existence of that church.





## The Chapel of S. John the Baptist.

On the right of the apse is the Chapel of S. John the Baptist, whose statue in marble by Simone, the brother of the great Donatello (XV century), is over the altar. On the left wall is painted the Baptist reproaching Herod for having married his brother's wife; and on the right is represented the Saint's decapitation, and next it we see his head being given on a dish to the dancing girl. This chapel is vaulted, in a manner rare in Rome, with white glazed *terra-cotta* sunk panels, in the centre of which is a rose *in alto rilievo*.

Outside the chapel are two monuments which, like that of Cardinal Venerio, are very good specimens of Renaissance work, especially the larger one, that of Cardinal Roverella, which bears the date 1476 and is supposed to have been executed by Giovanni Dalmata and Andrea Bregno. The Cardinal is represented in a recumbent posture with two angels keeping watch over him, one at his head the other at his feet. At the top of the arch over the monument is God the Father surrounded by angels, and below them the Blessed Virgin with the Divine Infant on her knees and two angels beside them. On the right, S. Peter is presenting the Cardinal to our Lord and His Blessed Mother; S. Paul is at



Monument to Cardinal Roverella





the opposite side. Two exquisitely carved *candelabra*, in bas-relief, form a border for the sides of the monument; and the *sarcophagus* is highly decorated with very graceful arabesques and with symbols of the fine arts of which it would appear the Cardinal was a generous patron. There are two angels at the base of the tomb, one on either side, admirably designed and executed.

Monument      The other tomb is that of John Francis Brusati, nephew of Cardinal Roverella, Arch. Brusati. and Archbishop of Nicosia in Cyprus. It is the work of Luigi Capponi.



## Chapel of SS. Cyril and Methodius.

Off the right aisle is the chapel of SS. Cyril and Methodius elaborately adorned with frescoes executed by Signor Nobili in 1886. The erection of this chapel was begun in 1882 by desire of Pope Leo XIII. The Sovereign Pontiff and Bishop Strossmayr shared between them the expenses of the work. In the apse Pope Leo is depicted presenting the church to our divine Lord Who is seated on a throne. S. Cyril is standing on the right and S. Methodius on the left, both in episcopal robes. Overhead are represented the Eternal Father and the Holy Spirit. On the right wall is

the scene of SS. Cyril and Methodius standing before Pope Adrian II. and a Council of Bishops, and answering the charges brought against them of attempting to introduce novelties into the liturgy of the Church. The *fresco* on the left wall represents the translation of the body of S. Cyril to the church of S. Clemente. The four Evangelists and angels adorn the dome.

A short notice of the two great saints to whom the chapel is dedicated may not be out of place here. Constantine Cyril was born at Thessalonica of a Senatorial Roman family at the close of the eighth, or in the early part of the ninth century. He was called « the Philosopher » on account of his rare talents and aptitude for learning. He knew the Greek, Latin, Slavonian, and Turkish languages intimately. He is said to have specially learned the last-named that he might become the apostle of those peoples who spoke it, namely the Huns, Chazari, and Tartars. While at Pontus, whither he went to learn the Turkish tongue, he heard of the shrine built in the sea by angelic hands to contain the body of the martyred Pope S. Clement. He also learned that on the anniversary of the Saint's martyrdom the waters of the sea used to recede to allow the people to walk in pilgrimage to the shrine, but that for five centuries this miracle had not taken place. Feeling an inspiration to search for the relics of the martyr he persuaded the Bishop of Pontus to

S. Cyril.



(fot. Anderson).

Apse of Chapel of SS. Cyril and Methodius. (NOBILI).





accompany him. The result we learn from Gaudericus<sup>1</sup> of Velletri who is believed to have heard the relation from the mouth of Cyril himself. He says: « Taking ship on a calm day, under the guidance of Christ, they went their way... and sailing with great devotion and confidence, with hymns and prayers, they reached the island in which they supposed the holy martyr's body to be. They then went round about it, and searched with a great many lights, and with increasing earnestness in their holy prayers, and then began very anxiously and unremittingly to dig in the mound where so great a treasure was suspected to rest. After working there for some time and with much holy desire, on a sudden as if God would shew them a brilliant star, one of the precious martyr's ribs shone forth. At this spectacle all were filled with immense exultation, and not without some excitement, they now vied with each other in digging out the earth more and more, and then in due time his sacred head also appeared, and, after a little while again, behold the whole body was found, by degrees and at intervals, as it were out of a number of parcels of holy relics. And, last of all, there appeared the anchor with which he had been cast into the deep. After the

<sup>1</sup> Gaudericus was Bishop of Velletri in the reign of Pope John VIII (872-882).

Bishop had celebrated the holy Mysteries on the spot, the holy man lifted the chest of sacred relics upon his own head and bore them to the ship; they then transported the treasure (*Gloriam*) to the metropolis. On the following morning the entire population assembled, and, taking up the chest of sacred relics, bore it round the city with much thanksgiving, and coming to the greater Basilica honourably deposited them there » <sup>1</sup>.

In 848 the Chazari, descendants of the Huns, at that time settled on the Danube, sent to the Emperor Michael III. for apostles to teach them the faith of Christ. Cyril was charged with the important mission, and immediately began his apostolate which was crowned with the highest success. Having instructed and baptized the Cham together with his whole nation, and having committed the mission to the care of pious and zealous pastors, he returned to Constantinople, passing on his way through Pontus where he obtained from the Bishop the relics of S. Clement. These he afterwards always carried about with him on his missionary journeys until he finally brought them to Rome.

Cyril's second mission was to the Bulgarians in which he was joined by his younger brother Methodius.

Saint From Bulgaria the missionary brothers  
Methodius. went on to Bohemia and Moravia, and are

<sup>1</sup> Rondinini, *S. Clemens Papa et Martyr* (1706), pp. 47-8.



regarded as the Apostles not only of these countries, but of all or nearly all those in which the Slavonic tongue is spoken. Stredowski, in his *Sacra Moraviae Historia*, styles SS. Cyril and Methodius the Apostles of Moravia, Bohemia, Silesia, Cazaria, Croatia, Circassia, Russia, Dalmatia, Polonia, Carinthia, and Carniola. S. Cyril is said to have invented the Slavonic alphabet; and both brothers translated the Gospels and the Missal into that language. For daring to use such a language in the Office and Liturgy of the Church they incurred the displeasure of the Archbishops of Salzburg and Metz, who complained of the novelty to Pope Nicholas I. (858-867). Nicholas invited the two apostles to Rome and expressed his desire that they would bring with them the relics of S. Clement. The men of God hastened to answer the summons; but Pope Nicholas died before their arrival. His successor Adrian II. (867-872) on hearing of their approach to the Eternal City went out with his clergy to meet them and to honour the precious treasure which they were bringing with them to Rome. The relics of S. Clement were received with great joy and placed under the High Altar in the Basilica raised to his memory.

Pope Adrian with a Council of Bishops and Clergy heard the defence which Cyril and Methodius had to make to the charges brought against them. So convincing and full of wisdom were the arguments which the saints

used to justify their actions, that they were declared not only free from censure, but their zeal was highly approved. It was not however until the reign of Adrian's successor, John VIII., that the privilege was formally granted to Methodius, then Archbishop of Moravia, by which the Slavs were permitted to use their own language in the liturgy of the Church, a privilege which they enjoy to this day, and which they exercise even at S. Clemente when they come in pilgrimage to Rome <sup>1</sup>.

Pope Adrian consecrated the two brothers Bishops. Cyril died in Rome in 869, and was buried in S. Clemente. Methodius died in 885, but the place of his death is uncertain. Some writers maintain that he died in Rome and was buried with his brother in S. Clemente; while others say that he died in Moravia. Joannes Dubravius, speaking of the persecution excited by Swatopluk against Methodius, says: « The Blessed Methodius being unable to tolerate the destruction of his flock returned again to Rome where he died, and was buried in the church of S. Clemente » <sup>2</sup>. But in the Acts of the Archiepiscopal Curia of Olmutz, published in 1869, it is stated in the part on the series of Bishops of Moravia and especially of Olmutz, that « S. Methodius having been appointed by the Holy See,

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix I. for an account of the great Slav pilgrimage at S. Clemente in 1881.

<sup>2</sup> *Historia Bohemiae*, Bk. II.

Bishop of Moravia and Pannonia, took up his residence at Velehadria, then the Capital of Upper Moravia, where also lived the Prince Swatopluk. Here was a magnificent church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and in it the Blessed Methodius was buried » <sup>1</sup>. Velehadria with its church fell into ruin in the course of time; but no record can be found as to what became of the body of Methodius. Perhaps the relics of the Saint were brought to Rome on the destruction of the church in which they were, according to the Acts quoted, first interred. In the Second Part of this work we shall speak further on the relics of SS. Cyril and Methodius.

Between the chapel of SS. Cyril and Methodius and the door leading to the Sacristy is a monument to Frederick Ambrose Ramsden of Huddersfield, England, and his wife. This monument was erected in 1874 and first stood where the entrance to S. Cyril's chapel now is, and thus placed, it was opposite a similar monument in the left aisle.

Near the door leading to the Sacristy is a sepulchral tablet on the wall bearing the following inscription:

HIERONYMUS GHINUCCIUS STEPHANI PATRITII SENENSIS F. - A JULIO II P. M. IN SACRA LATERANEN. CONCILIO CUM PRIMIS

<sup>1</sup> Card. Bartolini, *Memorie Storiche, Critiche, Archeologiche dei SS. Cirillo e Metodio*, pp. 183-4.



ADHIBITUS - SUB LEONE X AD HENRICUM  
 BRITANNIAE REGEM NUNTIUS - EPISCOPUS  
 VIGORNIEN. CAM. APOSTOLICAE CLERICUS  
 ET AUD. GENERALIS - AB HADRIANO VI. AD  
 MELITEN. ECCLESIAM, MOX AD ASCULANUM  
 TRANSLATUS - A PAULO III. CARD. CREA-  
 TUS, APOSTOLICIS BREVIBUS, REFORMAN-  
 DAE CURIAE - TRIDENTINO CONCILIO CON-  
 VOCANDO, ORDINANDOQUE PRAEFECTUS -  
 POSTREMO AD PACEM CONCILIANDAM IN-  
 TER CAROLUM CAESAREM, ET FRANCISCUM  
 GALLIAE REGEM E LATERE LEGATUS - POST  
 EGREGIE TANTIS IN REBUS NAVATAM OPE-  
 RAM IN AEDE TITULI SUI H. S. E.  
 OB. ANNO SAL. MDXXXI - DIE III JULII.



## Chapel of S. Dominic.

At the foot of the right aisle is the Chapel of S. Dominic encrusted with rich and varied marbles. This chapel, according to De Burgo <sup>1</sup>, was originally dedicated to the Holy Cross; but according to Rondini <sup>2</sup> who quotes Del Sodo for his authority, it was dedicated to S. Cyril. It was restored about the year 1715 by Cardinal Thomas Maria Ferrario O. P., Titular of the church, who had the cancella, such as still encloses the other chapels, removed and the walls decorated with pictures representing scenes from the

<sup>1</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, (1762) p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> *S. Clemens Papa et Martyr*, (1706) p. 337.

life of S. Dominic. Two of the three pictures then painted, namely those on the side walls, suffered so much from the damp during the next ten years that Pope Benedict XIII on the occasion of a visit to S. Clemente in 1726 ordered two new pictures to be painted, and a foss made outside the chapel to remove the cause of the damp. The altar-piece represents S. Dominic in ecstasy and supported by angels; the painting on the right wall represents the Saint restoring to life a mason who had been crushed to death by the fall of a vault at S. Sisto Vecchio; and that on the left wall represents the Saint working a similar miracle in favour of the young Prince Napoleon Orsini. All these paintings are believed to be the work of Sebastian Conca (1676-1764).



## Chapel of S. Catherine, Virgin and Martyr.

In the left aisle is the Chapel of S. Catherine, Virgin and Martyr. Catherine was a noble lady of Alexandria who at an early age devoted herself to the study of the liberal arts. Her learning was equalled only by her sanctity, and so great was her zeal that she even endeavoured to convert

Saint  
Catherine.

the Emperor Maximin to the true Faith. The Emperor, astonished at the wisdom she displayed, had her arrested, and sent for the most learned men to reason with her in the hope of inducing her to worship idols; but the contrary happened, for the wisdom of Catherine, who was then but eighteen years old, so confounded the learned Doctors that they all renounced their errors and embraced the Faith of Christ. At this the Emperor became so enraged that he ordered them to be put to death, and caused Catherine to be imprisoned for eleven days without food or drink. During her imprisonment, Maximina the wife of the Emperor and Porphyrius the General of the army visited her and were so convinced by her teaching that they too believed and suffered martyrdom for the faith. The Emperor's rage now knew no bounds and he ordered Catherine to be tortured on the wheel; but here too he was foiled, for angels came and broke into pieces this instrument of torture. Catherine was finally condemned to die by the sword. Thus she gave up her beautiful soul to God, and her body was borne by angels to Mount Sinai in Arabia and there interred.

This chapel was painted by Masaccio (1402-1443). Another chapel, still existing, that of Pope Nicholas V in the Vatican, was painted about the same time by an « Artist Saint », a Dominican Friar, B. Angelico. Beato Angelico da Fiesole (1387-1455).



Both artists had much in common until Masaccio came to Rome, for both had been brought up in the atmosphere of Christian art at Florence. But while the devotional feelings of Beato Angelico were intensified by his visit to the Eternal City, those of Masaccio deteriorated, for, from constantly studying the remains of pagan art in Rome, he was betrayed into a desire for a purely material perfection, to which he gave expression in the chapel of the Carmine at Florence after his return to that city. Thus Masaccio may be regarded as the Father of the Renaissance in art; but Beato Angelico lived and died the faithful exponent of all that was beautiful in Christian art. « He must », says Michelangelo, « have seen in vision the heavenly scenes that came from his brush ». The tomb of this great artist is to be seen in the Basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva at Rome, a church which was designed by two other Dominican artists, Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro. When Masaccio, however, painted the chapel of S. Catherine he was still the christian artist as his work there proves, and if it falls short of that of his great contemporary at the Vatican, it yet possesses a perfection of its own for which some of his admirers would rank him even higher than the « Artist Saint ».

Of the particulars of Masaccio's life little more is known than that, as Vasari tells us, he was originally named Tommaso or Maso, and that the reproachful

*accio* was added on account of his total neglect of all the external relations of life, in his exclusive devotion to art. Though his work in the chapel of S. Catherine has suffered much from time and from retouching, yet it is a pleasure to turn to it and catch such glimpses of the master mind and hand as we find in the admirable foreshortening of the drooping head of the dying Saviour and in that head of S. Catherine which, for sweetness of expression and beauty, could hardly be surpassed.

Over the entrance to the chapel on the outside is represented the Annunciation; our Lady at prayer in an arcade receives the angel's salutation. Under the arch are painted the twelve Apostles. On the wall be-

hind the altar is the Crucifixion. The peaceful landscape in the background represents the repose of that world which the Creator meant for peace. On the left of the Saviour we see the demon violently dragging away the soul of the thief who reviled our Lord, while on the right an angel receives that of the repentant one. She to whom *much had been forgiven because she loved much* embraces the Cross, beside which the Beloved Disciple stands weeping. The sword of sorrow has pierced the heart of the Virgin-Mother, and, worn out by suffering, she faints in the arms of the women supporting her. The individuality of the painter's conception is strongly







(fot. Alinari).

The Annunciation: Archangel Gabriel. (MASACCIO).



(fot. Alinari).

The Annunciation: the P. V. Mary. (MASACCIO).







(fot. Brogi).

The Crucifixion. (MASACCIO).



marked in the boy with the basket and the group of four men of whom one is pointing to the Cross while the others seem to listen.

On the wall to the left is depicted the martyrdom of S. Catherine. The Saint in the presence of the Em-

**Martyrdom  
of  
S. Catherine** peror disputes with the learned Doctors of Alexandria on the Mysteries of Religion. She converts them, and the consequence of their conversion is seen in the fiery death to which they are doomed, while the holy virgin exhorts them to perseverance. Higher up on the wall she is seen reproving the idolaters; then in another scene she is conversing from her prison window with the Empress whom she also converts. The Empress, too, suffers for the Faith which she has just embraced, and an angel receives her soul. Catherine's turn has now come, and the enraged Maximin condemns her to be tortured on the wheel, but an angel appears and breaks that engine, the fragments of which wound the executioners while Catherine escapes unhurt. We next see the Saint kneeling with her neck bared while the axe in the executioner's hand is raised to deal the deathblow to that noble virgin, noble by birth, noble by reason of her great intellect, but noblest in the possession of virtues which won for her the martyr's crown. A small but very delicately-designed fresco



shows the angels laying her in the tomb on the summit of Sinai.

The subjects on the opposite side have been detached from the wall, put on canvas and replaced, in order to preserve them from the damp which had already considerably affected them. The one near the altar represents the inundation of Alexandria as a punishment for the death of the martyrs won to the faith by S. Catherine's eloquence. The others refer to S. Ambrose. In one he is represented as a child in the cradle; in another he is being proclaimed Bishop; while the third shews him on his death-bed.

On the vault are painted the four Evangelists with their emblems, and the four Doctors of the Church.

The present altar in this chapel was erected in 1819 by Cardinal Benedict Naro, Titular of the church, who was buried at the back of the altar, and whose body is now interred under the floor of the subterranean church, the coffin having been found, like that of Cardinal Canali, during the excavations.

On the altar is a very sweet and devotional picture of the Madonna by Sassoferrato (1605-1685). John

Madonna	Baptist Salvi, surnamed Sassoferrato from
by	the place of his birth, is specially famous
Sassoferrato	for his pictures of the Madonna whom he
delighted to represent as the simple Handmaid of the	



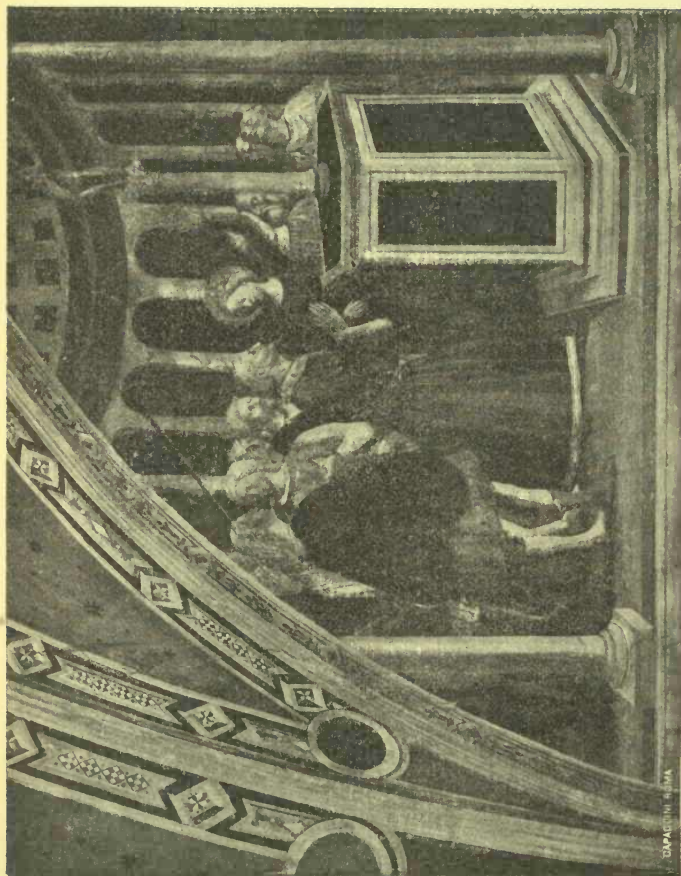
(fot. Brogi).

S. Catherine of Alexandria disputing with the Doctors.  
(MASACCIO).



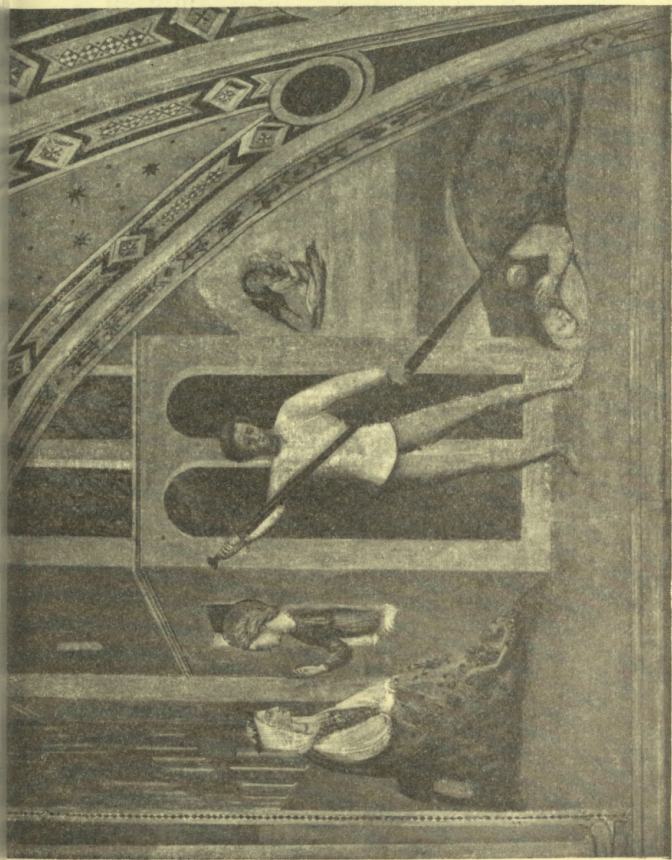






(fot. Brogi).

S. Catherine reproving the idolaters. (MASACCIO).

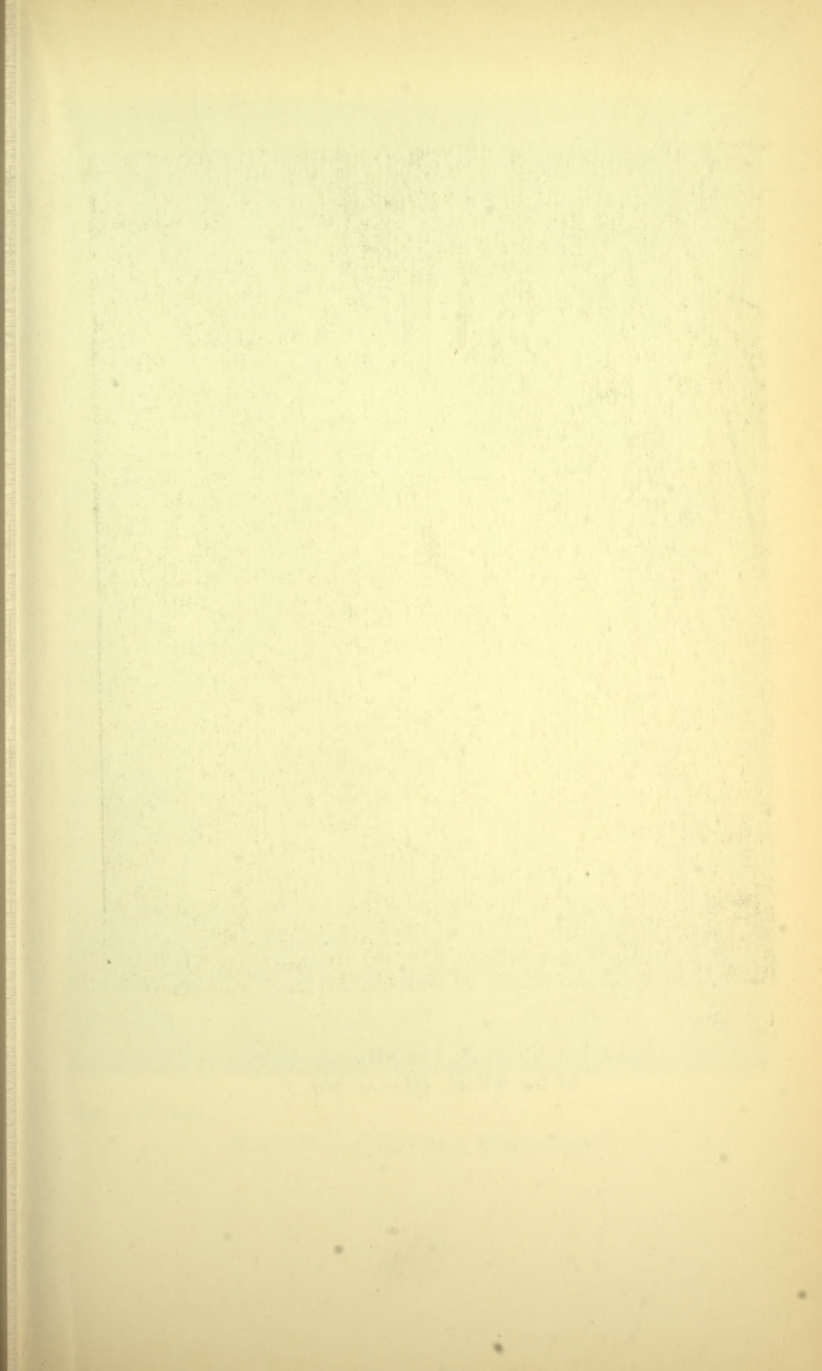


(fot. Brogi).

S. Catherine converts the Empress. Martyrdom of the Empress.  
(MASACCIO).









(fot. Brogi).

An angel delivers S. Catherine from torture  
at the wheel. (MASACCIO).





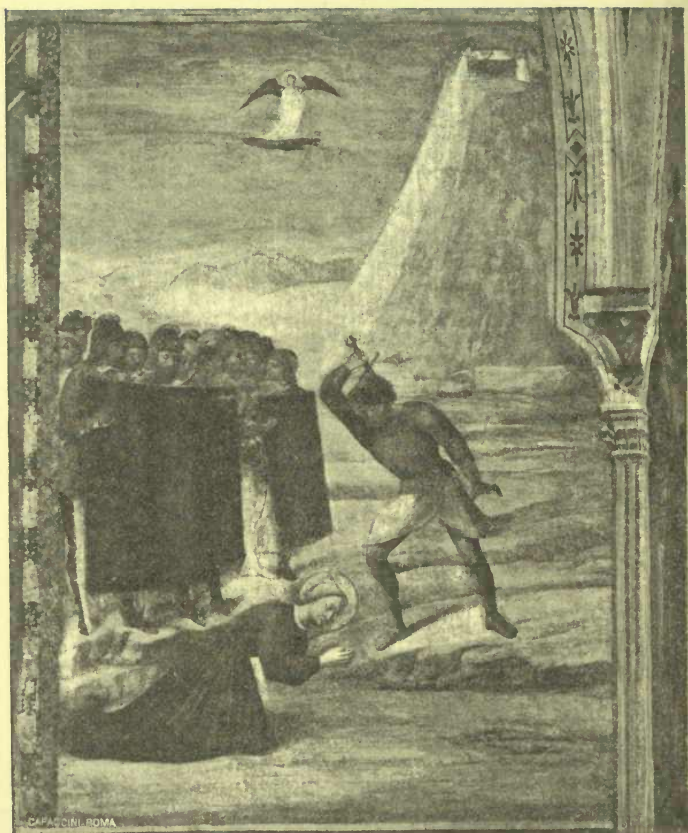
(fot. Anderson).

Head of S. Catherine. (MASACCIO).



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(fot. Brogi).

Martyrdom of S. Catherine.  
Her interment on Mount Sinai. (MASACCIO).

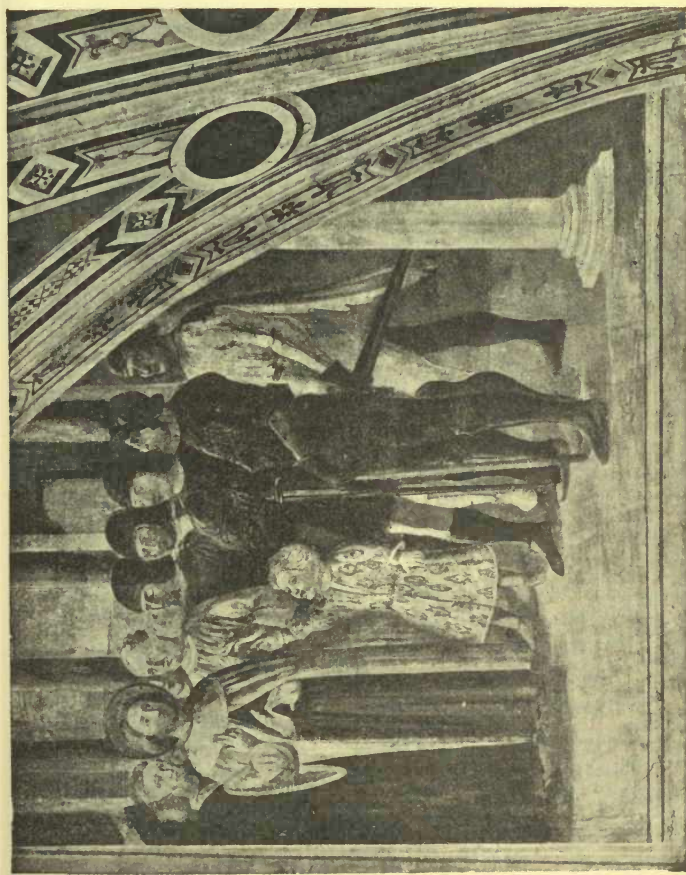




(fot. Brogi).

S. Ambrose in the cradle. (MASACCIO).

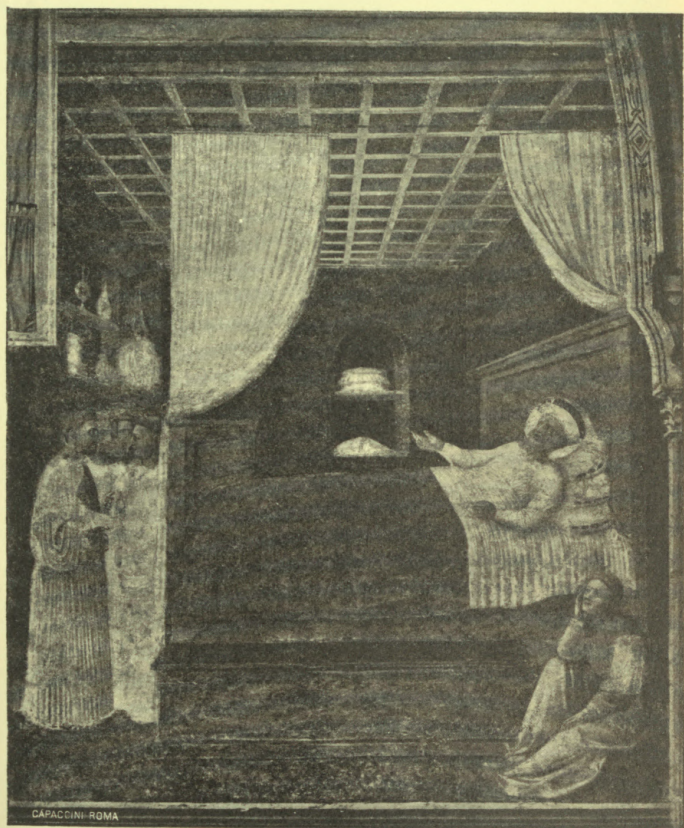




(fot. Brogi).

S. Ambrose being proclaimed Bishop. (MASACCIO).





(fot. Brogi).

Death of S. Ambrose. (MASACCIO).







(fot. Brogi).

The four Evangelists  
with the four Doctors of the Church. (MASACCIO).









The Madonna (SASSOFERRATO).

Lord <sup>1</sup>. Sweetness of expression, humility, and modesty, are portrayed under a simple garb. In Sassoferrato we catch the last rays of the Christian school of painting, which, after the death of Raphael, began its declining course until it became almost extinct in the vulgarities and extravagancies of the seventeenth century. We have thus brought together in this chapel two artists, one the Father of the Renaissance, the other the last exponent of that Christian art to which the Renaissance spirit proved so fatal.

On the pier to the left outside the chapel is a fresco of S. Christopher who suffered martyrdom in Lycia under the Emperor Dacius.

Affixed to the wall on the right of the side entrance to the church is a marble slab bearing an eulogium to John Anthony Capisucco, Cardinal Titular of the church, who died in 1569.

In this left aisle is the monument already referred to as corresponding to the one in the right aisle <sup>2</sup>. It was erected in 1874 to the memory of Bartolomew Count de Basterot and his wife. The Count was born in Dublin, and his mother's name was Adelaide

<sup>1</sup> Sassoferrato's famous picture of our Lady of the Rosary with S. Dominic and S. Catherine is in the church of S. Sabina.

<sup>2</sup> These two monuments are entirely out of harmony with the style of the church.



O' Brien. Near this monument, between two pillars, is a slab on the ground to the memory of Isabella Crescia Melioris Strozia who died in 1562. On the pier between this aisle and the nave is a slab to Peter Ant. Salv. Fulgenato, an Auditor of the Rota, who died in 1628.

In the middle of the nave is a sepulchral tablet to Vincentius Laureus, Cardinal Titular of S. Clemente, who died in 1592; and another to his nephew Aloysius Guarnerius who died in 1595.

On the wall to the left of the principal entrance to the church is a slab containing an inscription which records a gift made by Gregory, Titular of the church, of books of the Old and New Testaments. It runs as follows :

HISRAHELITICUS DO. OFFEREBAT POPULUS RURI  
 ALIUS QUIDEM AURUM, ALIUS NAMQUE ARGENTUM  
 QUIDAM COQUE AES, QUIDAM VERO PILOS CAPRARUM  
 INFELIX AUTEM EGO GREGORIUS PRIMUS PBR. ALMAE  
 SEDIS APOSTOLICAE HUIUSQUE TITULI GERENS  
 CURAM AC BEATI, SUPREMUS CLIENS CLEMENTIS  
 OFFERO DE TUIS, HAEC TIBI XPE THESAURIS  
 TEMPORIBUS SCISS ZACCHARIAE PRAESULIS SUMMI  
 PER MARTYREM ET SANCTUM, PARVA MINUSCULA TUUM  
 CLEMENTEM CUJUS MERITIS MEREAR DELICTIS CARERE  
 ATQUE AD BEATAM AETERNAM INGREDI VITAM.  
 AISTI QUANTUM HABES, REGNUM VALET COELORUM.  
 SUSCIPE HOS DOMINE, VELUT MINUTA VIDUAE QUAESO,  
 VETERIS NOVIQUE TESTAMENTORUM DENIQUE LIBROS  
 OCTATEUCHUM, REGUM, PSALTERIUM, AC PROFETARUM  
 SALOMONEM, ESDRAM, HISTORIARUM ILLICO PLENOS.  
 REQUIRE SYLLABARUM. LECTOR SEQUENTIAM HARUM.

The last line is engraven on a different quality of marble which shews that the inscription is incom-



(fot. Brogi).

S. Christopher.





plete. The name of Pope S. Zacchary <sup>1</sup> enables us to fix the eighth century as the date of the inscription, as he reigned from 741 to 752 <sup>2</sup>.

On the opposite wall is a marble slab containing part of S. Gregory the Great's homily on S. Servulus. We give it here :

IN EA PORTICU QUAE EUNTIBUS AD ECCLESIAM BEATI CLEMENTIS EST PERVIA, FUT QUIDAM SERVULUS NOMINE, QUEM MULTI VESTRUM MECUM NOVERUNT REBUS PAUPER, MERITIS DIVES, QUEM LONGA AEGRITUDO DISSOLVERAT. NAMA PRIMA EVA AETATE USQUE AD FINEM VITAE PARALITICUS JACEBAT . . . HUIC AD SERVIENDUM MATER CUM FRATRE ADERAT ET QUIDQUID EX ELEEMOSYNA POTUISSET ACCIPERE, HOC EORUM MANIBUS PAUPERIBUS EROGABAT. NEQUAQUAM LITERAS NOVERAT, SED SCRIPTURAS SACRAS SIBI MET CODICES EMERAT, ET RELIGIOSOS QUOSQUE IN HOSPITALITATEM SUSCIPIENS HOS CORAM SE LEGERE SINE INTERMISSIONE FACIEBAT. FACTUMQUE EST UT, QUANTUM AD MENSURAM PROPRIAM PLENE SACRAM SCRIPTURAM DISCERET, CUM, SICUT DIXI, LITERAS FUNDITUS IGNORARET STUDEBAT IN DOLORE SEMPER GRATIAS AGERE HYMNIS DEO ET LAUDIBUS DIEBUS ET NOCTIBUS VACARE. SED CUM JAM TEMPUS ESSET UT TANTA EJUS PATIENTIA REMUNERARI DEBUISSET, MEMBRORUM DOLOR AD VITALIA REDIIT. CUMQUE SE JAM MORTI PROXIMUM AGNOVIT, PEREGRINOS VIROS ATQUE IN HOSPITALITATEM SUSCEPTOS ADMO-

<sup>1</sup> Cfr. Bartolini, *Di S. Zaccaria Papa*, Ratisbona, 1879, p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> The slab bearing this inscription was found by chance in the course of a restoration made by Cardinal Albani, Titular of the Church, in 1727 (See *Liber Pontif.*, Bianchini's Ed.).

NUIT UT SURGERENT, ET CUM EO PSALMOS PRO EXPECTATIONE EXITUS SUI DECANTARENT. CUMQUE EIS ET IPSE MORIENS PSALLERET VOCES PSALLENTIUM REPENTE COMPESCUIT CUM TERRORE MAGNI CLAMORIS DICENS: TACETE. NUMQUID NON AUDITIS, QUANTAE RESONANT LAUDES IN COELO? CUMQUE AD EASDEMLAUDESQUAS INTUS AUDIERAT, AUREM CORDIS INTENDERET, SANCTA ILLA ANIMA A CARNE SOLUTA EST.

(S. GREGOR. LIB. I. MOR. HOM. XV. N. V.) <sup>1</sup>

This homily serves for the lessons of the Second Nocturn of the feast of S. Servulus, celebrated at S. Clemente on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December. The following is a translation of the part given above:

*In the porch at the entrance of S. Clement's church, Servulus, whom I, and many of you too, knew, passed his days. He was poor in this world's wealth, but rich in heavenly treasures. He was paralysed from his infancy and whatever he could get in the way of alms he distributed to the poor by the hands of his mother and brother who attended him. He had had no education, but he had bought the books of the Sacred Scriptures and had them continually read to him by pious persons to whom he gave hospitality. And thus it came about that though, as I have said, altogether without education, he yet acquired a deep knowledge of Holy Scripture, according, of course, to his capacity. In his sufferings he never ceased, either day or night, to give thanks to God and sing His praises. But when the time arrived for him to receive the reward of his patience, the paralysis spread from his limbs to his vital organs. And when he thus perceived that he was near death he asked the pilgrims and those whom he had lodging*

<sup>1</sup> The reference should, we believe, be as follows:

*S. Gregor. Hom. XV. in Evang.*

*with him, to arise and sing Psalms with him in preparation for his departure. And as the dying man sang with them he suddenly interrupted them saying, in imperious tones: Hush! Do you not hear the melodies of the heavenly choir? And whilst his heart thus strove to catch those strains of praise which he had heard, he expired.*

Over the principal door of the church, inside, is the following inscription recording the restoration made by Clement XI in 1715:

ANTIQUISSIMAM HANC ECCLESIAM  
 QUAE PENE SOLA AEVI DAMNIS INVICTA  
 PRISCARUM URBIS BASILICARUM  
 FORMAM ADHUC SERVAT  
 EO IPSO IN LOCO AEDIFICATAM  
 AC IN TITULUM S. R. E. PRESB. CARD. ERECTAM  
 UBI S. CLEMENTIS PAPAE ET MART. PATERNA DOMUS  
 FUISSE CREDITUR  
 A SANCTO GREGORIO MAGNO  
 GEMINIS HIC HABITIS HOMILIIS  
 ET SACRA QUADRAGESIMALI STATIONE  
 CONDECORATAM  
 CLEMENS XI. PONT. MAX.  
 IPSO ANNIVERSARIAE CELEBRITATIS  
 EJUSDEM S. CLEMENTIS DIE  
 AD CATHOLICAE ECCLESIAE REGIMEN ASSUMPTUS  
 IN ARGUMENTUM PRAECIPUI IN EUM CULTUS  
 INSTAURAVIT ORNAVITQUE  
 ANNO SALUTIS MDCCXV. PONTIF. XV.

The following is a translation of the above inscription:

*This very ancient church, almost the only one that, unchanged by the ravages of time, still preserves the form of the old basilicas in this City; built upon the very spot where the paternal house of S. Clement, Pope and Martyr is believed to have stood, and*



*giving a Title to a Cardinal Priest of the Holy Roman Church ; honoured by S. Gregory the Great with two homilies which he delivered here ; and by the holy Station of Lent — the Supreme Pontiff Clement XI., elected to govern the Catholic Church on the very feast of the same S. Clement, in token of his particular devotion to him, restored and ornamented in the year of salvation 1715, the fifteenth of his Pontificate. <sup>1</sup>*

The restoration and ornamentation referred to are not, it must be regretted, in keeping with the style of the church ; but what is especially to be lamented is the substitution of the heavy carved flat ceiling for the simple open timber roof <sup>2</sup> such as we see today in the church of S. Sabina. The *stucco* ornaments over the arches of the nave as well as the frescoes on the clerestory walls and over the principal door also form part of this restoration. We give the frescoes in the following order <sup>3</sup>.

On the wall over the principal door are the figures of SS. Cyril and Methodius. S. Cyril on the right of the entrance and S. Methodius on the left. Both are dressed in episcopal robes ; both wear the Greek Pallium, and hold in

SS. Cyril  
and  
Methodius.

<sup>1</sup> This inscription shows that Pope Clement XI, in common with others, regarded the upper church as the ancient one ; which erroneous opinion, as we have already stated, Fr. Mullooly corrected by his discovery.

<sup>2</sup> The old open roof work (see pag. 99) still exists above the heavy coffered ceiling. There are also some frescoes at the gable end above the apse.

<sup>3</sup> For a pictorial illustration of these frescoes see « The Basilica of S. Clemente in Rome, *illustrated*. » (S. Clemente — 1 franc).



Basilica of S. Clemente before 1715.





their hands the Greek Crozier. These are the work of Pietro Rasina.

The first *fresco* on the clerestory wall, to the right of the principal entrance, represents the death of S. Servulus, by Chiari (1654-1729), a Roman artist and pupil of Carlo Maratta. The Saint is represented sitting on a pallet listening to a man who is reading the Scriptures, a pilgrim kneels before him, and two other men stand looking at him; his aged mother leans on her staff, and an angel is distributing bread to the poor.

Death  
of  
S. Servulus.

The second *fresco*, by Piastrini, represents the Emperor Trajan sentencing S. Ignatius to be sent to Rome to be devoured by wild beasts for the entertainment of the people, in the Coliseum. Two soldiers hold his right hand while the left is pointed heavenwards.

S. Ignatius  
sentenced  
to death.

The third *fresco* by Giacomo Triga represents the two Martyr Bishops, S. Ignatius and S. Polycarp the disciple of S. John, embracing each other, while the rude soldiers endeavour to hurry away S. Ignatius, who is in chains, to the ship in the background. In front of a building, behind the saints, is a group of men and women, some of whom are engaged in conversation. The composition of this picture is very good and it is tastefully executed.

Departure  
of  
S. Ignatius  
for Rome.

The fourth and last *fresco* on this side, by Pierleone Ghezzi (1674-1755), gives the closing scene of the holy Bishop's life. S. Ignatius longed to land at Pozzuoli on the spot hallowed by the Martyrdom of S. Ignatius footprints of S. Paul ; but, as we are told, a strong gale drove the ship to Ostia. He reached Rome on the last days of the games, and was presented, with the Emperor's letter, to the Prefect. He was immediately taken to the Flavian Amphitheatre or Coliseum, where four lions were let loose upon him, and instantly all that remained of that heroic servant of God were the larger bones, which are now venerated under the High Altar in the church of S. Clement.

All the frescoes on the clerestory wall to the left refer to S. Clement.

S. Clement and Flavia Domitilla. The first represents the Saint giving the veil to Flavia Domitilla who is kneeling before him. This is the work of Pietri Pietro (1665-?).

The second by Sebastian Conca (1676-1764) represents S. Clement causing water to gush from a rock during his exile in the Crimea where he was condemned to labour in the marble quarries. The miracle is recorded in the first Responsory of the Office of the Saint as follows : « At the prayer of S. Clement there appeared to him the Lamb of God, from under Whose feet a living foun-

Miracle  
of  
S. Clement.

tain flows, the gushing of the stream makes glad the City of God. I saw upon the mountain the Lamb standing ».

The third *fresco* represents the martyrdom of S. Clement. The Pope is seen on a precipice over the sea with an anchor fastened to his neck. Two men are holding it while an officer commands the soldiers to hurl Clement into the waves. An angel appears above bearing a palm branch. This picture is believed to be the work of Giovanni Odazzi (1663-1731).

Martyrdom  
of  
S. Clement.

The last fresco represents the translation of the relics of S. Clement. The Saint is laid on the bier in his pontifical robes. At his head are two torch-bearers, while the Pope and his attendants stand at his feet; above, angels are hovering in the air. Odazzi is also the painter of this picture <sup>1</sup>.

Translation  
of  
S. Clement's  
relics.

All the frescoes described are tolerably fair specimens of that feeble, mechanical, and conventional, school of which Carlo Maratta was the chief.

On the ceiling of the left aisle Pietro Rasina has represented the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin; while

<sup>1</sup> We differ from Fr. Mullooly with regard to the painters of some of these frescoes, basing our reason for so doing on a manuscript on the subject seen by us in the Vatican Library, *Codex Vat.*, n. 8635, pp. 45-6 <sup>b</sup>.



Pictures      on that of the right aisle the same artist  
                  on            has depicted the Glory of S. Servulus.  
 Ceiling        Neither of these pictures is deserving of

much praise. On the ceiling of the nave is a good picture by Chiari representing the « Apotheosis » or Glory of S. Clement. The foreshortening of this painting is admirable, the problem of representing on a horizontal surface a person in the act of ascending or moving [upwards perpendicularly, is solved in a masterly manner.

The walls of the church were covered with frescoes before the restoration made by Pope Clement XI. in 1715; but the pictures had at that time become so much damaged that the subjects of them could only be recognised with great difficulty; they were consequently condemned to destruction, the only ones that escaped being those of Isaias and Jeremias over the entrance to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, the frescoes over the Episcopal throne in the apse, and those on the gable end above the present flat ceiling. It would appear that these frescoes were painted about the year 1400, for, according to Rondinini (1706, p. 313), there existed beneath some of the pictures in the right aisle the following inscription: « Si vis pictoris nomen cognoscere lector, de Vetere Urbe<sup>1</sup> Juvenalis est

<sup>1</sup> The present Orvieto.

nomen ejus ». « If you wish, reader, to know the name of the painter, Giovenale of the Old City is his name ». This is the same Giovenale who painted the frescoes in the apse, and who, according to Millinus, lived about the year 1400. The loss of these frescoes, indistinct as they were, must be regretted no less than the other changes made at this period ; and the artist and archaeologist of today would certainly prefer to see upon the walls even a fragment of fresco than a coat of white-wash <sup>1</sup>.

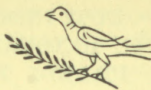
We have now finished the upper church. To descend to the subterranean basilica we pass through the atrium of the Sacristy where are to be seen plans of the different strata of buildings here and of their relations to one another. There are also copies of all the frescoes in the lower church, a coloured plan of the Mithraic Temple, and a representation of the vaulting and ornamentation of the stuccoed Oratory of S. Clement, as well as a marble bust of Fr. Joseph Mullooly, O. P., who discovered and excavated the subterranean church.

<sup>1</sup> For a description of the frescoes which have been covered over or destroyed see *Codex Vat. manuscript no. 9023*, in Vatican Library.









## SECOND PART

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### THE SUBTERRANEAN BASILICA

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From the atrium of the Sacristy a wide and well-constructed stairway of twenty-two steps, made in 1866 of Alban *peperino*, leads to the Subterranean basilica. The first object that attracts the attention of the visitor as he descends is the following inscription on a marble slab:

PATERNAS AEDES - A. D. CLENENTE APOSTOLORUM PRINCIPIS DISCIPULO ET SUCCESSORI - SACRA RELIGIONIS CULTUI DEVOTAS - PETRI, PAULI, BARNABAE, APOSTOLORUM PRECIBUS; BINIS GREGORII MAGNI CONCIONIBUS; ET DEBELLANDAE PELAGIANAE HAERESI S. ZOSIMI PONT. CONCILIO CELEBRES; VENERANDIS LYP SANIS SANCTORUM - CLEMENTIS PONT. FLAVII CLEMENTIS VIRI CONS. IGNATII ANTIOCHI M. M. - SERVULI C. NECNON CYRILLI ET

METHODII SLAVORUM APOST. DITATAS -  
 TEMPORUM INCURIA LONGO SAECULORUM  
 TRACTU IGNOTAS - FR. JOSEPH MULLOOLY  
 ORD. PRAED. PROVINCIAE HIBERNIAE -  
 HUIUS COENOBII PRAESES - FELICITER  
 DETEXIT MENSE SEPT. MDCCCLVII - AG-  
 GESTAS MACERIES REMOVERE INSTITUIT -  
 SACRAE ARCHAEOLOGIAE COETUS REM  
 ALIQUAMDIU CONTINUAVIT - RELICTAM  
 PRAESES RESUMPSIT PERFECIT. SCALAS  
 AD HYPOGEUM CONDIDIT - ARCUS ET  
 FORNICES SUSTINENDAE SUPERIORI BASI-  
 LICAЕ EREXIT - PECUNIA AD TANTUM  
 OPUS CONLATA - A PIO IX PONT. OPT.  
 MAX. - ET MUNIFICIS UNIVERSI ORBIS  
 LARGITORIBUS.

PIUS IX PONTIFEX OPTIMUS MAXIMUS -  
 HANC DIVI CLEMENTIS MEMORIAM - NON  
 SINE DEI NUMINE INVENTAM - QUATER  
 INVISIT.

AN. DOM. MDCCCLXVIII.

The following is a translation of the above in-  
 scription:

*The paternal residence of S. Clement the disciple and suc-  
 cessor of the Prince of the Apostles, dedicated by himself to the  
 service of God, honoured by the prayers of the Apostles Peter,  
 Paul, and Barnabas, by two homilies of S. Gregory the Great,  
 by the Council held by Pope S. Zosimus to combat the Pela-  
 gian heresy, enriched by the relics of Saints Clement, Pope;  
 Flavius Clemens, of Consular rank; Ignatius of Antioch: Mar-  
 tyrs; Servulus, Confessor; Cyril and Methodius, Apostles of the  
 Slavs — But in course of time neglected; and unknown for many  
 centuries, was fortunately discovered in September 1857 by Fa-  
 ther Joseph Mullooly O. P., a member of the Irish Province. He  
 began the work of excavation. The Commission of Sacred Archaeo-*

logy continued it for a time. He resumed and completed it. He constructed the stairs leading to the subterranean church, and the piers and arches which support the upper one. The expenses were defrayed by a subsidy to the great work, granted by Pope Pius IX., and by subscriptions received from all parts of the world.

*The Memorial of S. Clement, found, not without Divine inspiration, was four times visited by Pope Pius IX.*

1868 A. D.

On the walls to the right and left of the stairs are fragments of inscriptions in the well-known Damasene character<sup>1</sup>. Those on the right wall Damasene are so few and disconnected that their meaning cannot be ascertained. They seem to belong to three different metrical lines, and De Rossi thought that at least one of them formed a part of some hexameter verses composed by S. Damasus in honour of S. Clement. Those on the left wall, however, have not baffled the extraordinary genius of that renowned archaeologist who has supplied in italics the letters

<sup>1</sup> Speaking of another inscription by Pope Damasus - that on the tomb of Pope S. Cornelius, the martyr - Cardinal Wiseman (« Fabiola », p. 153) says: « How is this authorship traceable? Very easily. Not only do we know that this holy Pope (Pope S. Damasus) took pleasure in putting verses, which he loved to write, on the tombs of martyrs, but the number of inscriptions of his yet extant exhibit a particular and very elegant form of letters, known among antiquarians by the name of « Damasian ». »



that are wanting. The restored inscription runs as follows:

*Salvo SIRicio epISCopo ECCLESIAE sanctae G. A.  
PRAESeBYTER sancto MARTYRI clementi hOC  
voluit dedicatum* <sup>1</sup>.

The pieces of marble containing the letters in Damasene character were found in various parts of the upper and lower churches; but the inscription, indicated by their being arranged in one line, shows that they must have originally stood side by side, probably on a screen similar to that which surrounds the choir in the upper church. Now, *Episcopus Ecclesiae Sanctae* <sup>2</sup> can be used only of a Pope, and the only Pope in early times in whose name the syllable SIR occurs is *Siricius*; thus we have in them a record of some restoration or addition made in the ancient basilica by Pope S. Siricius who governed the church from 384 to 398; the church having been built, if not in the time of Constantine as is generally believed, at least early in the fourth century, for S. Jerome, the Secretary of Pope S. Damasus, mentions it as having already existed some time before his day:

<sup>1</sup> See De Rossi — « *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana* ». Seconda Serie (1870-5) I. p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> The Pope adds to his name when signing the acts of a General Council *Episcopus Ecclesiae Catholicae*, as being Universal Bishop.

« Nominis ejus (S. Clementis) memoriam usque hodie Romae exstructa ecclesia custodit ». S. Jerome wrote thus about the year 392.

On a marble bracket at the foot of the stairs is a mutilated statue of S. Peter as the « Good Shepherd », which was found in the old Oratory or *Do-* Statue  
*minicum* of S. Clement during the excava- of S. Peter.  
tions. Such a statue seems to be not only rare but



unique either in Rome or out of it, for though bas-reliefs representing S. Peter in the quality of *Pastor Bonus* or Good Shepherd have been found in the catacombs and on sarcophagi, so far as we are aware, no other statue has ever been discovered. The crispy hair and beard and furrowed cheeks, so well known to archaeologists as characteristic of S. Peter, leave no doubt as to whom it represents. A facsimile of this statue, as it was when whole,

stands on another bracket. Between both are two plaster casts of the marble pillars referred to when treating of the upper church, with the name of Cardinal Mercurius carved on the capital of one of them. Over these, fixed into the wall, is a cast of the beam

in the choir of the upper church bearing the name of the same Cardinal Mercurius. On the landing at the foot of the stairs is a plaster cast of the pagan altar



Statue of Mithras.

in the Mithraic Temple; on a bracket in the corner is a statue of the pagan deity, Mithras, represented rising from a rock *Deus ex petra*. This statue is twenty-five inches high and represents the deity from the knees



upwards emerging from a rock and wearing a Phrygian cap. Near it is the marble bust of the Sun-god. Both pieces of sculpture were found in the Temple of Mithras;



fot. Alinari

Bust of the Sun-god.

and to the temple of Mithras, now happily delivered from the waters which for forty years had inundated it, these interesting pieces of sculpture are now about to be restored.

From this landing we descend by five steps to the Narthex. On the wall to the right at the foot of this stair is the slab with the sepulchral inscription of the eleventh century which was found over a grave in the narthex near the entrance to the nave. The inscription runs thus:

SUBTUS HAC TERRA NRA SEPULTA SUNT  
 MEBRA - NEPTIS CUM AVA DULHCI ZA-  
 NEPE VOCATA - PETRUS ET DARIA BIOLA  
 SIMULQ. MARIULA - CUM HIS QUIB. AD-  
 JUNCTIS ALIIS TRIB. - KAL. MAD. OB  
 DULHC. TEP. GREG. VI. PP. IND. IIIIX -  
 ANN. I. NIKL. PP. OB. MARIA . . . . .  
 IND. IIIIX - M. SEBT. D. XVIII.

*Our remains lie beneath this spot Zanepe with her grandmother Dulhci, Peter and Daria, Biola, and little Mary with whom three others are buried. Dulhci died on the 1st of May in the reign of Gregory VI., indiction<sup>1</sup> the sixth. Mary died in the first year of the reign of Pope Nicholas, indiction the seventh, the 18th of September.*

We are now in one of the first Christian Basilicas constructed in Rome, and the oldest in existence. The Greek word Βασιλική in its Latin form, Basilica, means a royal hall or place of justice. The Romans took the idea of a « basilica » from the Greeks, and the first to appear in the City of the Caesars was constructed in A. U. C. 568 by Cato the Elder (*Marcus Portius*)

<sup>1</sup> An indiction is a cycle of fifteen years.

and hence called the Portian Basilica <sup>1</sup>. The Basilica Julia, the remains of which are still to be seen in the Roman Forum, was built by Julius Caesar under the direction of Vitruvius and was used not only for trying cases-at-law, but also for the reception and audience of foreign Ambassadors. It was supported by one hundred marble columns in four rows and enriched with decorations of gold and precious stones. Pagan Rome possessed many other great basilicas. In Ecclesiastical parlance the word is employed to denote a church of great magnificence, and in such a sense S. Jerome, S. Ambrose, S. Augustine, and other early writers use it. The Christian basilica was, it is now believed, constructed after the style of a Roman house rather than after that of a civil basilica. Recent discoveries show that the Roman house had a vestibule or atrium with a fountain in the centre; a peristyle or portico, supported by columns; a *tablinum* or reception hall; and, at each side of the *tablinum*, a passage leading to the garden <sup>2</sup>. Now this is the general disposition of a Constantinian basilica. The visitor entered through a courtyard or atrium having a fountain in the centre, then a portico or narthex supported by columns, and finally pas-

<sup>1</sup> It was situated in the neighbourhood of the Curia, Roman Forum, and near where the Arch of Septimius Severus now stands.

<sup>2</sup> See Prof. Marucchi, *Basiliques et Eglises de Rome*, p. 17.



A. Entrance to the Subterranean Basilica.

B. Narthex.

D. North aisle.

C. Nave.

E. South aisle.

FF. Site of marble enclosure of ancient choir.

GGG. Apse of subterranean Basilica.

H. Tomb of S. Cyril according to De Rossi.

II. Passage leading to the walls of the Imperial  
and Republican or Kingly Periods.

a. Altar.

bbb. Modern pilasters from which spring vaults  
supporting the pavement of present church.

1. Fresco of the Last Judgment — The Damned (?).

2. Niche of the Madonna.

3. The Last Judgment — The Elect (?).

4. Mutilated figure of Our Saviour.

5. Crucifixion of S. Peter etc.

6. Baptism by immersion.

7. Scenes from the *Dialogues* of S. Gregory.

8. Installation of S. Clement by S. Peter.

S. Clement celebrating Mass. Sisinius.

9, 10. S. Antoninus. Daniel in the lions' den.

11. Life, death, and recognition of S. Alexius.

12, 13. S. Giles. S. Blase.

14. S. Prosper.

15. The Crucifixion.

16. The holy women at the Sepulchre, descent  
into Limbo, and marriage feast at Cana.

17. Assumption of the B. V. Mary.

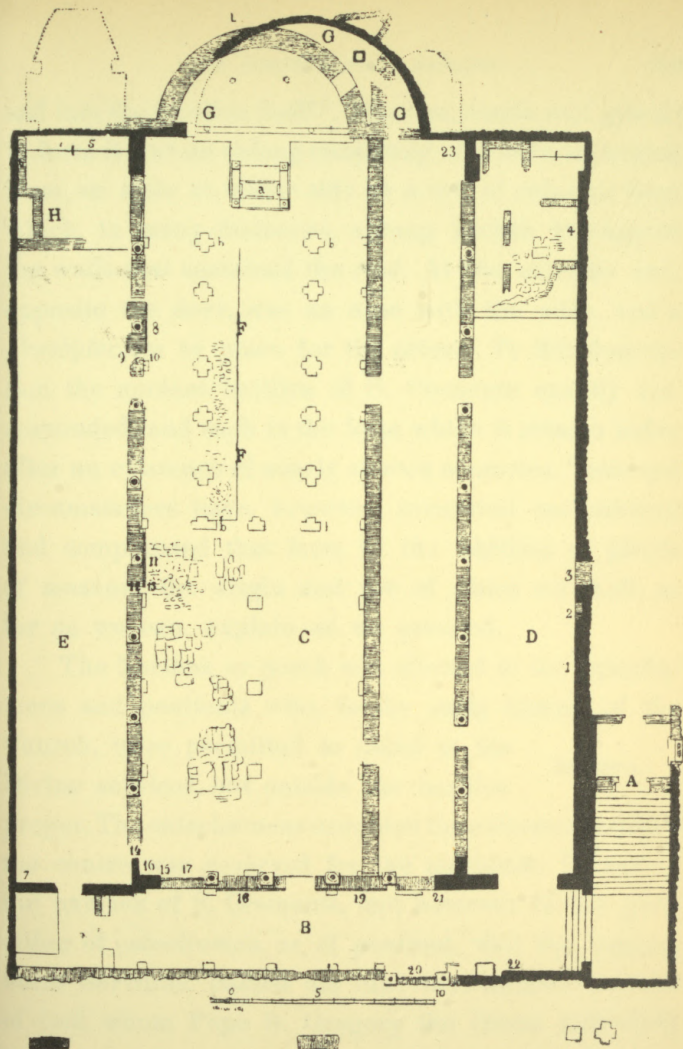
18. Translation of S. Clement's Relics.

19. Shrine of S. Clement in the Sea.

20. Our Saviour, Archangels, and Saints.

21, 22. Heads of unknown personages.

23. The descent into Limbo.



Walls of ancient  
Basilica.

Walls supporting  
upper church.

Modern  
pilasters.

Ground Plan of the Subterranean Basilica.





sed into the basilica itself <sup>1</sup>. This was simple and grand; in form it was an oblong consisting of a nave separated from an aisle at either side by a row of columns from which, in many instances, sprang arches to support the walls that sustained the roof. At the extreme end, opposite the door, was an apse with the altar, and a *Presbyterium* or place for the priests. To this description the ancient basilica of S. Clemente exactly corresponded, and such is the form which it retains today after an existence of nearly sixteen centuries. Time and circumstances have, however, somewhat encumbered and complicated that form by the addition of pieces of masonry the origin and use of which we shall, as far as we can, explain as we proceed.

The Narthex or porch was allotted to the Catechumens and penitents who, in the early history of the Church, were permitted to assist at the  

Narthex.

 Divine services, but outside the basilica proper. The catechumens occupied the extremities, while the centre was reserved for the penitents. It was in the narthex of S. Clemente, not however in the garb either of catechumen or of penitent, that the beggar, Saint Servulus, passed his life; that humble servant of God whom Pope S. Gregory the Great (590-604) honoured by preaching the panegyric or homily, part

<sup>1</sup> See plan of present basilica, pag. 13.

of which we have already quoted. Originally, this narthex was divided from the nave by four pillars, three of which are still *in situ*. In the course of time <sup>1</sup> these pillars were found not to be any longer sufficiently strong to bear the weight of the portico, and the spaces between them were filled up with masonry, leaving only the space between the two centre ones open as an entrance to the church. The walls were afterwards adorned with frescoes. The space between the two pillars on the opposite side of the narthex was also filled up in the same way.

On this wall is painted a fresco which represents our divine Lord sitting on a throne the foot-stool of which, and carved heads on the elbow of our Saviour, etc. rests, are faintly distinguishable with the help of a strong light. To the right of our Saviour are the Archangel Michael and S. Andrew the Apostle; the Archangel Gabriel and S. Clement are on the left. The names of the Archangels are written horizontally

<sup>1</sup> Anastasius the Librarian says that Pope Adrian I (772-795) restored the Basilica of S. Clemente, at a time when such a restoration was much needed; but we cannot say whether the pillars were strengthened at this time. The wall on which the fresco of the Assumption appears was certainly built before 855. According to the *Liber Pontificalis* (Duchesne, Ed. II, p. 108), the basilica of S. Clemente suffered from the earthquake of 847, and the walls were then strengthened where reinforcement became necessary.

overhead, those of the Saints vertically at the sides. Standing before our Saviour are two unnamed ecclesiastics. The elder, who is believed to be S. Cyril, is tonsured and wears a beard; he holds in his right hand the book of the Gospels, the left hand is open and extended towards our Saviour. He is affectionately guarded by the Archangel Gabriel who has one hand resting on his shoulder; S. Clement, who has also a book in his left hand, makes with his right a gesture of recommendation of him to whom he is indebted for the honour paid to his relics. The younger ecclesiastic, believed to be S. Methodius, holds a chalice in his hands which are covered with a white veil. He is clean-shaven, after the manner of the Latins, and tonsured. Behind him stands the Archangel Michael, and beside him S. Andrew. Beneath the whole group is a liturgical inscription in five lines, the greater part of which has unfortunately disappeared; but enough was still legible in the time of Fr. Mullooly to enable him and De Rossi to conclude that it must be a funeral inscription. « It (the fresco) was evidently meant », says Fr. Mullooly, « for a grand commemorative picture of S. Cyril; and was probably an altar - piece, framed as it is between two pillars » <sup>1</sup>.

Monsignor Wilpert, in his work, *Le Pitture della*

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Mullooly, *S. Clement Pope and Martyr, and his Basilica in Rome*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (1873), p. 303.



*Basilica Primitiva di S. Clemente* <sup>1</sup>, speaks at some length of this fresco. He believes with Fr. Mullooly and De Rossi that the two unnamed ecclesiastics are SS. Cyril and Methodius, and thinks that the fresco marks the tomb of S. Cyril; but the learned archaeologist has gone more into detail than his predecessors, and, from an analysis of the picture and inscription, concludes that the scene contains all the elements of a « Particular Judgment ». We have, he says <sup>2</sup>, the dead man *peccatori* (see inscription) desiring eternal rest and the companionship of the saints; we have his patron saints recommending their client to the Saviour, the « Just Judge », Who, in the act of pronouncing sentence, makes with His right hand the distinctive gesture <sup>3</sup> used in speaking. The sentence cannot be otherwise than favourable since the person being judged is placed under the protection of two great saints, SS. Andrew and Clement, the former being the Patron of Greece.

<sup>1</sup> This is the only work of Monsignor Wilpert that we quote, so henceforth we shall give only the page when referring to it.

<sup>2</sup> Pag. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. Mullooly interpreted this gesture to be the blessing according to the Greek rite. The blessing in the Oriental rite is given with the first, second, and fourth fingers extended (as in our fresco); while, according to the Western manner, the thumb, fore, and middle fingers are extended. Both methods are found in early illuminated manuscripts, and on Celtic monuments.



Our Saviour, Archangels, and Saints.







Monsignor Wilpert thinks moreover that the inscription was composed by the Saint himself, for, he argues, no one else, not even his inveterate enemy would, in a funeral inscription, have used the term « sinner » in describing one who, like S. Cyril, had devoted himself and all his energies to one single idea, that of winning the Slav people to the faith of Christ, and consequently to civilization.

Fr. Mullooly says <sup>1</sup> that under this picture a tomb of brick was discovered on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1868 containing the skeletons of two men of more than ordinary size. « Can these », he asks, « be those of the two missionary saints ? ». As far as we know, only one document, the Duchesne manuscript, states the place where, in the church of S. Clement, the body of S. Cyril was laid. According to it, Pope Adrian II. (867-872) had the body of the Saint placed in the marble sarcophagus prepared for himself, and interred it in the basilica of S. Clemente *at the right side of the altar* <sup>2</sup>. Some regard this position as corresponding with the right side of the entrance to the church and thus, prob-

lows: *Deus qui confitentium te portio es defunctorum, preces nostras, quas in Sacerdotis tui illa depositione deferimus, propitius exaudi, ut qui nomine tuo ministerium fidele dependit, perpetua Sanctorum societate laetetur.* Cfr. Mabillon, *Museum Italicum* I, 2, p. 384; Monsignor Wilpert, p. 37, note 4.

<sup>1</sup> Pag. 306.

<sup>2</sup> The italics are ours.

ably, to that part of the Narthex where the picture in question is. In support of this opinion Monsignor Wilpert adds that the chapel of S. Dominic in the upper church which was formerly dedicated to S. Cyril, and under the altar of which his relics appear at some time to have been placed and there venerated, is situated over this part of the Narthex <sup>1</sup>.

Nicolò Signorili, Secretary of the Roman People, who wrote, some time before the year 1380, a *Relatio* or list of the relics venerated in Rome in his time, mentions the relics of S. Cyril amongst those preserved in the church of S. Clemente <sup>2</sup>.

Pompeo Ugonio, in his work on the *Chiese Stazionali di Roma* published in 1588, speaking of the relics in the Basilica of S. Clemente, says : « The body of B. Cyril, Apostle of Moravia, Slavonia, and Bohemia, is under the altar of the chapel near the Sacristy ».

This altar can be no other than that at present dedicated to S. Dominic.

Francesco del Sodo, in a manuscript Codex in the Vatican Library, quoted by Rondinini (p. 337), states that in his time a chapel was erected <sup>3</sup> to S. Cyril

<sup>1</sup> It seems to us unlikely that the body of such a great Saint would be interred in the Portico, which is outside the church proper; and to regard this position as at the right side of the altar seems rather far-fetched.

<sup>2</sup> This manuscript is in the Colonna archives.

<sup>3</sup> Del Sodo probably means a restoration, for the chapel seems to have been already in existence.



at the right side of the entrance to the basilica where the body of the Saint reposes.

Baronius in his notes on the Roman Martyrology says that the sacred relics of SS. Cyril and Methodius, who died in Rome and were buried in S. Clemente, were, he had heard, recently found in an ancient chapel in that church.

Giacomo Coleta says that SS. Cyril and Methodius died in Rome and that their bodies repose in the church of S. Clement whose body they had brought from Cherson to Rome <sup>1</sup>.

Ottavio Pancirolo in his work *Tesori nascosti nella Città di Roma*, published in 1626, asserts that the bodies of SS. Cyril and Methodius are buried in S. Clemente <sup>2</sup>.

In a manuscript book, compiled in the form of a diary, and entitled « Nonnullae Authenticæ super Sacris Reliquiis Sanctorum », preserved in the Archives of the Roman Vicariate, I have recently found, under date 18 August 1798, an entry to the effect that the relics of SS. Cyril and Methodius, which were enclosed in a marble urn preserved under the altar of S. Dominic in the Basilica of S. Clemente, were, on that date, transferred — an Irish Dominican Father being

<sup>1</sup> Coleta, *Illyrico sacro*, tom. VIII, p. 296, note 4.

<sup>2</sup> See Card. Dom. Bartolini, *Memorie S. C. Arch. dei SS. Cirillo e Metodio*, capo IV.

present — from S. Clemente to the church of S. Maria in Vallicella (Chiesa Nuova), and placed beside the relics of S. Philip Neri in that church. And, under date 27 August 1798, that the same relics were, on that day, brought back to the church of S. Clemente, and once more placed under the altar of S. Dominic. Writing in 1881, Cardinal Bartolini — in the work already cited, pp. 195-7, says that the relics of SS. Cyril and Methodius were venerated at S. Clemente up to the time of the unfortunate French occupation of Rome in 1798. During that disaster, he continues, which was the beginning of many social evils which have now for nearly a century oppressed us, the Basilica of S. Clemente, together with other Roman churches, was profaned by those republican hordes, and became the barracks of military marauders who plundered whatever was rich and artistic in the sacred edifices. They even went so far as to extract from their sepulchres the bodies of the Cardinal Titulars buried in the Churches, and broke into pieces the slabs which recorded their history and their acts... In these sacrilegious outrages, the venerable remains of the Apostles of the Slavs — SS. Cyril and Methodius — were also scattered and mixed up with the bones of the Cardinal Titulars in S. Clemente.

Unfortunately, Cardinal Bartolini does not give us his authority for these statements, and they are not

supported by the letters <sup>1</sup> of Fr. John Connolly, O. P. (second Bishop of New York) who was resident at S. Clemente at the time of the French occupation of Rome and all through it even up to the year 1814, and is, no doubt, the Irish Dominican Father referred to above as present at the translation of the relics of SS. Cyril and Methodius to the church of S. Maria in Vallicella. Fr. Connolly, writing to Bishop Plunkett of Meath in March 1798, says: « The French have seized on and sold everything belonging to the English and Scotch Colleges here ». But five months after this date the relics, as we have seen, existed at S. Clemente. Again in January 1800, after the French had left Rome, Fr. Connolly writes: « By having obtained leave from the Republic to open the church (of S. Clemente) after its suppression, and serve the public in it as chaplain and confessor, without any emolument, I have saved it from destruction, as also the convent and library ». Fr. Connolly would surely have done everything possible to save such precious relics as those of SS. Cyril and Methodius were they exposed to the outrages mentioned by Cardinal Bartolini as committed upon them. While not denying the possibility of profanation, we prefer to think that the relics are

<sup>1</sup> See « The Irish Dominicans in Rome », pp. 56-57.



still in S. Clemente, and to hope that they will one day be discovered.



## Tomb of S. Clement in the sea, etc.

There are two other large frescoes in the narthex both of which refer to S. Clement. The one nearer the entrance consisted originally of three compartments, of which only two remain and a small fragment of the third. This latter occupied the upper panel and apparently perished during the construction of the present church. The inscription which accompanied the subject of this panel is still legible:

IN MARE SUBMERSUM TUMULŪ PARAT  
ANGELUS ISTUM.

*An angel prepares the tomb submerged in the sea.*

Two feet can still be seen in the fresco; they are, probably, those of the angel. Judging from the subjects that follow we are inclined to suspect that the missing panel contained a representation of the martyrdom of S. Clement for whom the angel is preparing the tomb. S. Clement, as we have said, was exiled to the Crimea and condemned to work in the marble quarries there, and he was subsequently mar-

tyred by being thrown into the Black Sea with an anchor tied round his neck. Gregory of Tours tells us that, according to tradition, the spectators of the martyrdom were deeply grieved that they could not recover his body, and they begged God to let them know how it could be found. The Lord heard their prayers and consoled them by causing the sea to retire, thus enabling them to follow the receding waters till they reached the very spot where the body of the holy martyr lay enshrined in a temple built by angelic hands. For two centuries after, on the anniversary of the saint's death, and during the octave, a similar reflux of the waters took place, and the shrine was visited by the pious inhabitants of the Chersonese and by many pilgrims. Once on the last day of the octave a lady left her child inadvertently behind her in the temple, and discovered her mistake only when she had reached the shore and when it was too late to return for the missing babe as the waters had already begun to rise and the temple had become inaccessible. The sorrowing mother gave up her only child for lost, and on the following anniversary returned to the temple in the hope of finding at least the bones of her dear little one; but to her inexpressible joy she found her child alive and well on the steps of the temple.

In the second or central compartment of the fresco this temple is depicted with an altar which is covered



Shrine of S. Clement in the Sea.





with a white cloth and on which are two lighted candles. Three lamps are suspended from the ceiling, and from the canopy over the altar hang two curtains gracefully arranged. On the left is a city; from one of its gates a procession issues headed by the Bishop who holds the Crozier in his left hand, while the right is open and raised to his breast; this gesture and the expression of his countenance seem to indicate surprise at something which he unexpectedly witnesses. The Bishop, who is apparently going to the temple to celebrate mass, is accompanied by his assistants in the vestments proper to their order. Over the gate of the city is written CERSONA (Cherson). Two scenes are represented in the space between the Bishop and the altar. One depicts a mother stooping to take up her child who is stretching out his little arms to embrace her, above the woman are written the words: MULIER VIDUA (widow), and beneath the child: PUER (boy). In the other scene the same woman is seen standing with the child in her arms. This miracle, namely the finding of the child alive and well after a year's submersion in the water, is probably the cause of the Bishop's surprise. At the bottom of the panel is the inscription:

INTEGER ECCE JACET REPETIT QUEM PRE-  
VIA MATER.

*Behold unhurt he lies whom his returning mother seeks.*

Between the central and lower panel is a beautiful border <sup>1</sup> on which four doves are painted. These two panels are united at the centre by a well-executed medallion of S. Clement.

The third or lower panel contains pictures of the donors of the fresco, Beno De Rapiza and his family, who surround the medallion of the saint, and are represented as offering votive candles. Beno with his daughter Altilia and her governess, whose name commences with the syllable GE, stand on the right of the saint; at the left are the Lady Mary DOMNA MARIA, and a boy whose name is given as Clement PUERULUS CLEMENS. At the same side is the votive inscription:

IN NOMINE DNI EGO BENO DERAPIZA  
P. AMORE BEATI CLEMENTIS  
ET REDEMPTIONE ANIMEE PINGERE FECIT.

*In the name of the Lord I, Beno De Rapiza, for the love of the Blessed Clement and the salvation of my soul caused it to be painted.*

<sup>1</sup> This border has been exactly reproduced in the fresco over the Cardinal Titular's Chair in the apse of the upper church, a circumstance which leads us to suspect that at least the narthex of the lower church was still accessible when the later fresco was painted in the XV century.



Below the medallion in the form of a cross are written the words :

M  
E  
PRECE QUERENTES  
ESTOTE NOCIVA  
CAVEN  
TE  
S

*Seeking me in prayer beware of hurtful things.*



## The votive pictures.

There are four votive pictures in this church, three of which relate to S. Clement, and one to S. Alexius. The donor of the last-mentioned is unknown ; the one referring to the Translation of the relics of S. Clement was given by Maria Macellaria ; and two, the one just described, and another representing S. Clement celebrating Mass, are the gift of Beno de Rapiza. It is difficult to determine exactly the dates of the various frescoes in the subterranean church ; but from the sub-  
Date.  
 jects which they represent and from an examination of the walls on which they are painted, we can assign the votive series, which seems to have been executed by

one and the same artist and to have been the last painted, to the period between 867 and 1084. The Translation of the relics of S. Clement which is the subject of one of the series took place in 867, and therefore could not have been represented earlier; and the subterranean church was destroyed in 1084 after which no frescoes could have been painted there. De Rossi was of opinion that the earthquake which shook some of the pillars of the basilica of S. John Lateran in 896 extended to S. Clemente, and he assigns to that date the injury sustained by the columns which were afterwards strengthened by brick piers on which the paintings in question were executed <sup>1</sup>. Again, in the fresco of the Translation of S. Clement's relics we find Pope Nicholas I. represented, instead of his successor Adrian II., for Pope Nicholas was dead when the event took place. From this anachronism De Rossi <sup>2</sup> argued that the fresco is not likely to have been made until some time after the death of both Pontiffs. Muratori too, the great authority on Mediaeval Italy, lays down the following rule as to the use of the *cognomen* or surname: « In Italy

<sup>1</sup> Some of the pillars at least must have been strengthened before this date for the fresco of the Assumption is painted on one of the brick piers in question, and this fresco was executed during the Pontificate of Leo IV (847-855).

<sup>2</sup> « Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana » seconda serie-I. - pp. 140-1.

cognomens or surnames were introduced by a slow process; they were very rare in the tenth, not so unfrequent in the eleventh, and common in the twelfth century. The Venetians were the first to use them; but among the Romans even in the eleventh century they were extremely rare ». We cannot therefore place these frescoes, on which the surname De Rapiza occurs, earlier than the eleventh century. The researches, too, of Corvisieri on the Ancient Families in Rome have led that author to assign the rise of the De Rapiza family to the same eleventh century. The brilliancy also of the colouring at the time when these frescoes were discovered, fifty years ago, is an additional confirmation of De Rossi's opinion that they were executed shortly before the destruction of the ancient basilica <sup>1</sup>.

The determination of the date of these frescoes is interesting not merely from an archaeological point of view, but also from the intrinsic value of the paintings themselves. « These frescoes », says Fr. Mullooly <sup>2</sup>, « are a link in religious art, especially as being votive pictures, by which we can trace the ideas which prevailed when the catacombs had fallen into desuetude. Without a single symbol of the catacombs, or

<sup>1</sup> No unfinished frescoes were found in the ancient basilica, a fact from which we infer that the work of decorating the walls of that basilica was completed before its destruction.



a single figure imitated from them <sup>1</sup>, they contain a distinct, formed, and characteristic school of painting. The ideas elicited from them do not contradict the catacombs. And, from the point of view of art, they, as compositions, are superior to any we possess in the catacombs. With all their defects of drawing and perspective, the colouring is pleasing; they tell us their story well; and they exhibit a grouping and movement for which we seek in vain in the catacombs, or indeed in most of the pagan frescoes which have come down to us ».

Fr. Mullooly believed that these votive pictures represent a distinct and characteristic school of painting; but we prefer to think that they represent the beginning of that glorious school which, less than a century later, was to produce the beautiful mosaic apse in the upper church, and which was to reach its perfection in Pietro Cavallini and Giotto.

Our frescoes at S. Clemente, both votive and otherwise, have a special interest for us as valuable didactic compositions, the subjects of which were not chosen without a purpose, and that purpose was to instruct the faithful in the truths of our religion. They

<sup>1</sup> There is one exception. On the pier on which S. Clement is represented celebrating mass, there is, at the side, a painting of Daniel in the lions' den, a subject frequently met with in the Catacombs, though somewhat differently treated.

were painted, we must remember, in ages long before the invention of printing, when the great masses of the people were unable to read and therefore had to be instructed otherwise than by the use of books. « Painting », then, as S. Gregory the Great so aptly expressed it, « was for the uneducated who can only look, what writing is for those who can read ». And how many there are even in our days who will only look, even though they have the capacity to read. The truths, too, which these frescoes were intended to teach centuries ago, are the same today and will be the same for ever. The frescoes represent the teaching of the Church throughout the ages on the subjects which they depict; and the choice and arrangement of such subjects were determined by the traditions and legislation of the Church, the art alone being the work of the artist. From the early ages of Christianity we find the Fathers and Doctors of the Church extolling the importance of pictorial art in representing the acts of the martyrs, the lives of the saints, and the principal mysteries of religion. S. Jerome, S. Augustine, S. John Chrysostom, S. Paulinus Nolanus, S. Gregory the Great, and many other early Fathers have all eulogised the value of art in this respect. And we find the second Council of Nice, held in the year 787, making special legislation regarding the religious composition of works of art; and this, let it be noted,

was the very time when the iconoclastic heresy, begun and fostered by the Eastern Emperors, especially by Leo the Isaurian, was waging destructive war against images and the use of images, whether pictorial or sculptured, in the East. The Church, therefore, not only in the early centuries of its existence when it decorated the tombs of its martyrs in the catacombs, but all through the middle ages as the frescoes of S. Clemente testify, and down to our own day as nearly all the churches and art galleries of Europe bear testimony, has ever been the patron and promoter of art and of all that is noblest in art, dedicating it to the sublime mission of teaching the great truths of Christianity.

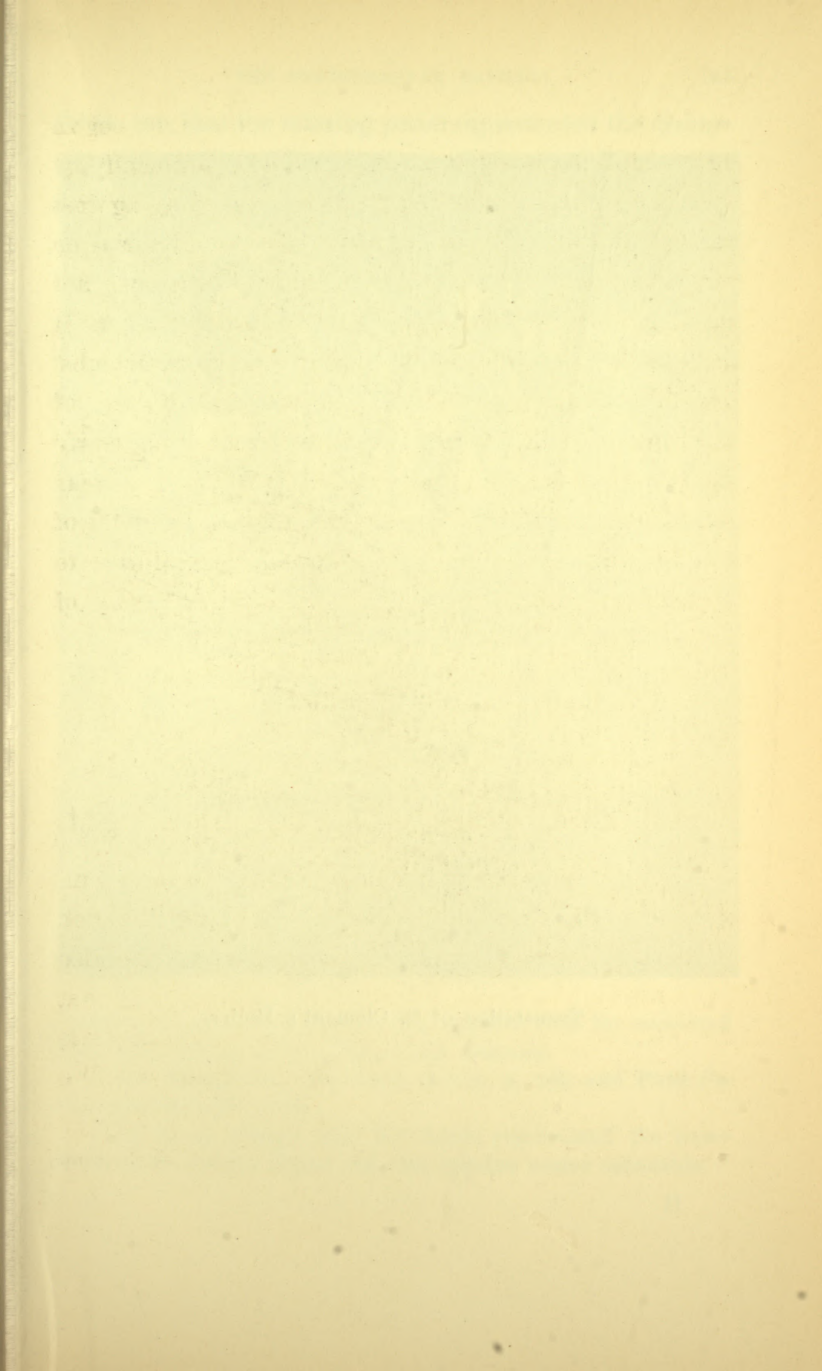


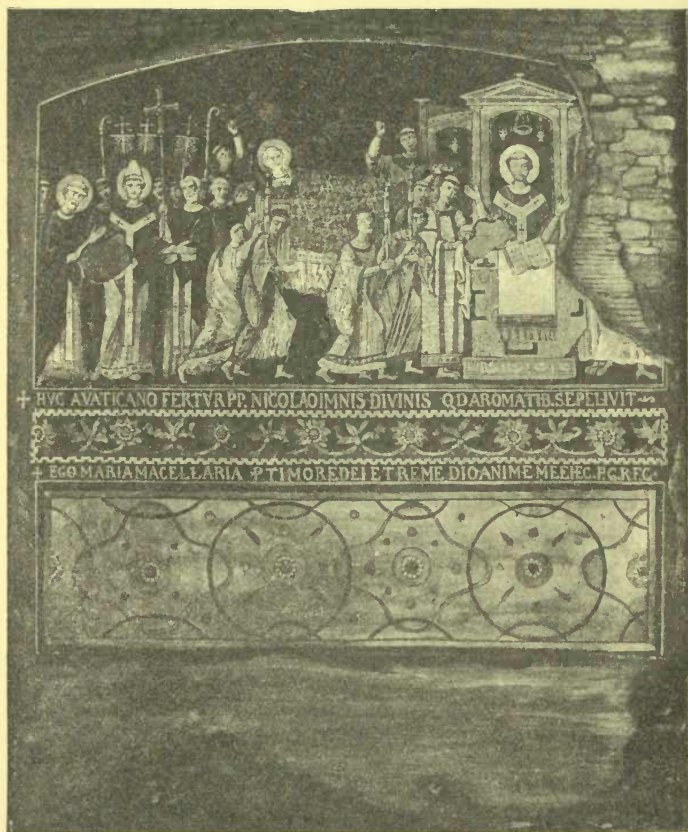
## Translation of the relics of S. Clement.

We are inclined to think that the fresco representing the Translation of the relics of S. Clement, which is the other votive picture in the narthex, was also tripartite or composed of three compartments, and that the third or upper compartment suffered the same fate as the corresponding part of the other frescoes <sup>1</sup>. We

<sup>1</sup> It is plain that the upper part of the walls of this ancient church was removed, most likely at the time of the con-







Translation of S. Clement's Relics.

think, too, that the missing panel represented the discovery of the relics of S. Clement by S. Cyril, and we should thus have represented in this church, as De Rossi and Monsignor Wilpert remark, the series of events relating to S. Clement, mentioned in the *Passio* <sup>1</sup>. The extant fresco represents the translation from the Vatican of the relics of S. Clement <sup>2</sup> which were brought to Rome by SS. Cyril and Methodius at the close of the year 867 and received by Pope Adrian II. who had them placed in the basilica raised to the memory of the saint. An anachronism, already referred to, occurs therefore in the portraiture of Nicholas I. instead of his successor Adrian II. S. Clement, placed on a bier, with head and shoulders and pallium exposed, is being borne by four persons. Two persons are swinging censers in the air, one at either end of the bier which is being followed by the Pope in Pontifical vestments. The Pontiff is attended by SS. Cyril and Methodius and accompanied by his cross-bearer and crozier-bearer, and also by bishops and clergy. Three other crosses with spangled banners are being carried behind the Pope. The Pontiff is again represented celebrating mass

struction of the present church. This appears from the mutilated figures at the top of so many of the frescoes.

<sup>1</sup> See Mombrizio, *Vita Sanct.*, I vol., p. 195, and Funk *Patres Apostolici*, II, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> De Rossi thought that this fresco represented the translation of S. Cyril's relics; but this opinion seems untenable.



in the basilica as the head of the procession arrive there. The missal is open before him at that part of the Canon of the Mass : *Per omnia saecula saeculorum pax Domini sit semper*. Four lamps are suspended from the ceiling, three over the Pope's head and one on his right. Underneath the picture is the inscription

HUC A VATICANO FERTUR PP. NICOLAO  
IMNIS QD. AROMATIBUS SEPELIVIT.

*Hither from the Vatican is borne, Nicholas being Pope, with divine hymns (the body) which he buried with aromatics.*

A simple but beautiful border separates this inscription from another containing the name of the donor :

EGO MARIA MACELLARIA P. TIMORE DEI  
ET REMEDIO ANIME MEE HEC P. G. R. F. C.

*I, Mary Macellaria, from the fear of God and for the salvation of my soul had this painted.*



## Sarcophagi, lapidary inscriptions, etc.

Near the picture of the Translation of S. Clement's relics is a marble sarcophagus containing the remains of a man and woman, supposed to be Beno De Rapiza and Maria ; another, opposite this, contains those of

a man. Beside the end wall of the narthex and parallel to it is a small coffin also containing human bones. At the fresco of S. Cyril is a large *terra-cotta* coffin which, as Fr. Mullooly tells us (p. 310), contained the body of a bishop or mitred abbot, but the moment it was exposed to the air, the human form, which seemed like a cobweb, disappeared. Near this is a small sarcophagus with a pagan inscription; it contained the bones of a little boy or a girl, possibly a Christian, for we know that the Christians sometimes appropriated pagan sarcophagi for the purpose of interment. The inscription runs :

D. M.  
JULIAE C. FIL.  
FELICITATI  
SPIRITO DULCISSIMO  
DEFUNCTO ACERVO  
QUAE VIXIT ANNO UNO  
MENSIBUS XI DIEB. TRIBUS  
FECERUNT JULIA VERNA  
ET FELICITAS PARENTES  
SIMILITER ACERVI ET  
INFELICISSIMI.

Opposite the door-way leading to the nave is a large marble slab, set into the wall, with the inscription :

MIRE INNOCENTIAE IENNARIO V. P. QUI  
VIXIT AN. LI MENS. V D. XXV NAM  
MECUM VIXIT AN. XXV MENS. V D.  
XXV SINE ALIQUA DISCORDIA AUT CON-  
TROVERSA FLORENTIA UXOR BENE-  
MERENTI IN PACE FECIT ET SIBI DEPO-

SITUS PRID. IDUS JUNII URSO ET POLE-  
MIO <sup>1</sup> D. P. FLORENTIA NONIS AUG. QUE  
VIXIT ANNIS V (?) M. X. VIXIT SUPER  
MARITUM SUUM ANNUS III M. II. IN  
PACE.

De Rossi in his *Inscriptiones Christianae* gives only a part of this inscription, as the slab was broken and only about half of it had been found at the time when the great archaeologist published that work.

Another slab, which has been put on pivots so that it may be easily turned, has an inscription on both sides, the one pagan, the other christian. The pagan one is as follows:

D. M.

M. AUR. SABINUS CUI FUT ET SIGNUM  
VAGULUS INTER INCREMENTA COAE-  
QUALIUM SUI TEMPORIS VITAE INCOM-  
PARABILIS DULCISSIMUS FILIUS.

The christian one runs:



SURO IN. PACE QUESQENTI  
EUTICIANUS FRATER FECIT.



<sup>1</sup> Ursus and Plemius were Consuls in 338.



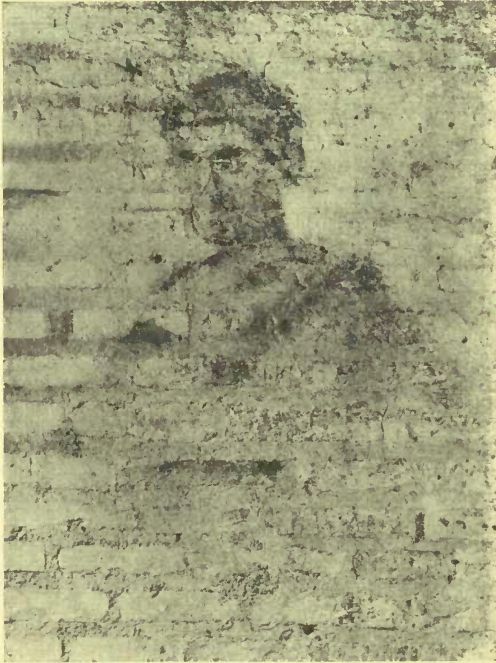
Inserted in the wall of the narthex are several other inscriptions and fragments of inscriptions, some of which are pagan, others christian; there are also exquisitely sculptured heads, capitals, and pieces of marble candlesticks, fragments of columns and mosaic pavements, and tiles with the name of the maker and of the consuls.

Before leaving the narthex there is one other fresco to be noticed. It is on the old wall near the entrance to the right, or north, aisle, and is painted on the brick. De Rossi believed it to represent Flavius Clemens. It may even be a representation of Pope S. Clement. The person seems to hold in his left hand an open book. The fresco is thought to belong to the old Roman school, and to have been executed soon after the construction of the church in the fourth century. On the fresco, scratched on the plaster between the bricks, is an inscription which has puzzled the ingenuity of paleographers to decipher.

On the opposite wall, under the skylight, was the head of a female person with a halo; this was supposed to represent Flavia Domitilla the wife of Flavius Clemens, and to have been painted in the fourth <sup>1</sup> or fifth century. Owing to the action of the damp on this wall

<sup>1</sup> Since the halo does not appear to have been represented so early as the fourth century, we cannot assign this fresco to that period.

the fresco has now completely disappeared ; but fortunately a copy of it remains, which may be seen



(fot. Anderson).

S. Flavius Clemens (?).

over the door leading to the present church from the atrium of the Sacristy.



## North aisle.

Entering the right or north aisle we perceive on the ground a large marble slab the inscription on which informs us that underneath lie the remains of Fr. Mullooly who died on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1880. In the wall to the right we notice that a breach had been made through the fresco and afterwards bricked up. This is the point at which Fr. Mullooly first entered the subterranean church when prosecuting his search for it.

We should not consider our history of this church complete if we did not say something about its discovery and the discoverer; and this point **Discovery** of our work may be the most appropriate **of** **Subterranean** for that purpose. Lest, moreover, what we **Basilica.** should say might appear partial, we give the words of a distinguished English Bishop <sup>1</sup>, now dead, who was intimately acquainted with Fr. Mullooly and, being himself an archaeologist, appreciated the work which the great Dominican accomplished at S. Clemente :

« It was so far back », he says, « as 1848 that Fr. Mullooly first suspected that the beautiful church of S. Clemente was not the ancient Basilica so frequently mentioned in early history. His study of the

<sup>1</sup> Right Rev. Dr. Brownlow, Bishop of Clifton.

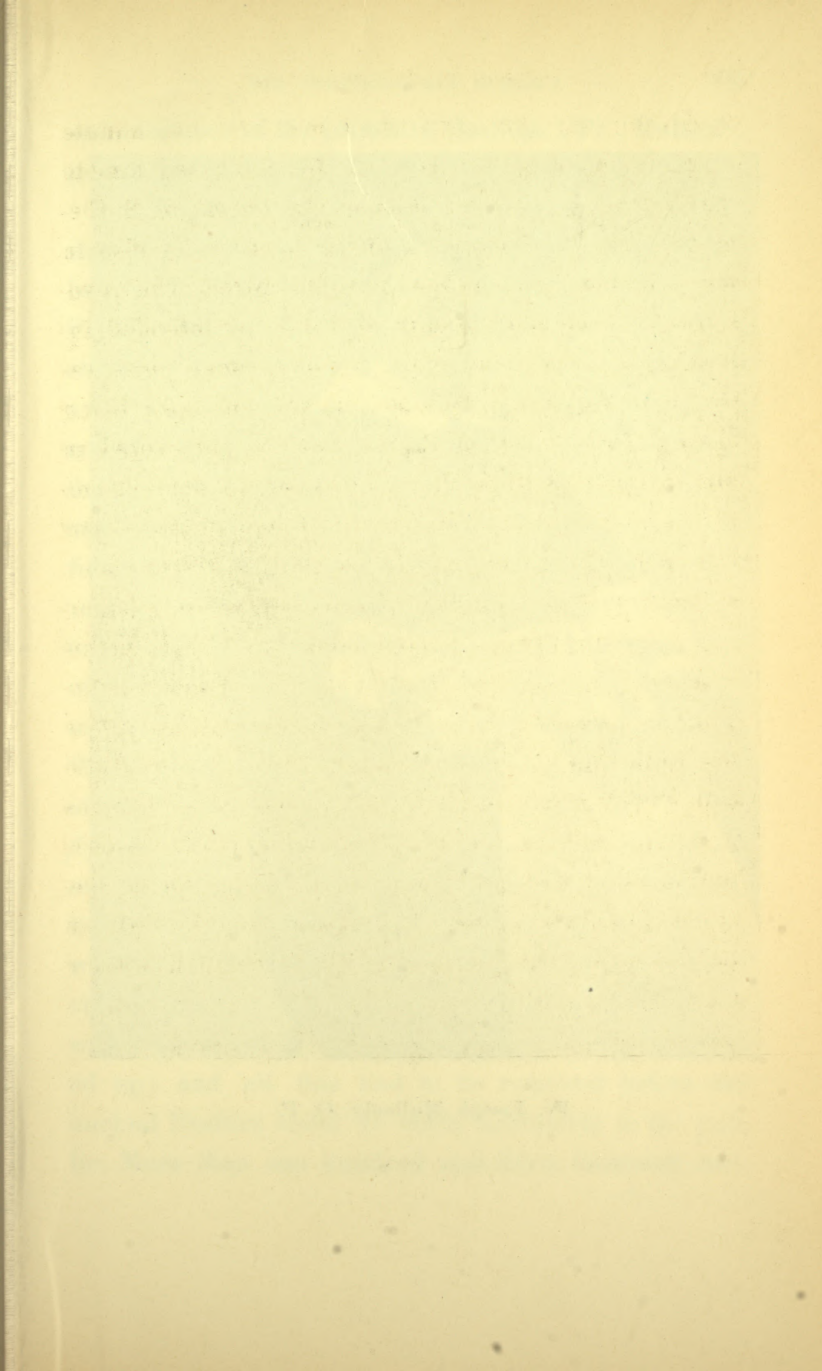


topography of this part of Rome, and his minute examination of the marbles in the choir, led him to the conclusion that the ancient *Dominicum* of S. Clemente must be sought for either beneath, or else in the neighbourhood of the present church. The revolution of 1848 obliged him to defer his intended investigations, and even when happier times came, various circumstances combined to prevent their being carried out. The good Prior, however, persevered in his determination to sift the matter to the bottom, and, to use his own words: ‘ In process of time, what had been but conjectures ripened into convictions, and, in 1857, the researches were commenced by opening a passage through a chamber containing some remains of ancient walls, and thence through another, quadrangular and vaulted. Here, having made an aperture in the wall, and removed a quantity of rubbish to the depth of fourteen feet, we discovered three columns standing erect, *in situ*, and some fragments of frescoes representing the martyrdom of S. Catherine of Alexandria, and a group of nineteen heads, with an equally poised balance <sup>1</sup>; and the inscription, written vertically:

STATERAM AUGET MODIUM JUSTUM.

These discoveries removed all doubt as to the site

<sup>1</sup> That is, scales on a horizontal line.





Fr. Joseph Mullooly, O. P.



and existence of the primitive Basilica'. Fr. Mullooly, p. 128 (First Ed.).

« The discovery of this ancient Basilica », the Bishop continues, « could not have been made by one better qualified to appreciate it than Fr. Mullooly Fr. Mullooly. At once a Religious, an ar- O. P. chaeologist, and a man of business, his antiquarian ardour never urges him to treat with disrespect the monuments of a later age, nor does his devotion to the traditions of the place make him shut his eyes to any discovery, however inconsistent with those traditions; so that we are equally sure of having every vestige of antiquity faithfully and jealously preserved to us, and of feeling that the mediaeval and even more modern beauties of his church will never be sacrificed to an inconsiderate enthusiasm for ancient remains. While we call attention to the archaeological importance of the discoveries, which, as De Rossi says, *we owe to fifteen years of indefatigable labour on the part of the meritorious Irish Dominican*, (Bullelt, p. 130), we must not forget our tribute of praise to the prudence with which these excavations were accomplished. The present church stood on a foundation of compacted rubbish, with which the abandoned Basilica had been purposely filled up; and all this had to be removed before the ancient Basilica could be made accessible to the public. More than one hundred and thirty thousand cart-

loads of rubbish had to be carried out in baskets, and brick vaults and arches had to be constructed in order to support the upper church. Fr. Mullooly engaged the services of Cav. Fontana, a Roman architect, and the whole of this difficult and delicate undertaking was accomplished without a single accident. Pope Pius IX., in 1866, was conducted by the enterprising Prior through the subterranean church, which had been buried and forgotten for so many centuries; the new High Altar was consecrated by Cardinal Guidi O. P. on January the 30<sup>th</sup> 1868<sup>1</sup>, and the relics of S. Clement and S. Ignatius of Antioch were carried in solemn procession round the Flavian Amphitheatre. The progress of the excavations has attracted great attention in Rome; and it has been mainly through the substantial tokens of their interest in the work, left by Catholics and Protestants alike, that Fr. Mullooly has been enabled to bring his labours to so successful an issue »<sup>2</sup>.

The right aisle was divided from the nave by eight columns of which seven are still *in situ*. The first, of *verde antique*, is of marvellous beauty and very remarkable for its vermillion  
Columns.

<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Guidi also consecrated the high altar of the present church.

<sup>2</sup> *Dublin Review*, Oct. 1871, pp. 403-4. For a sketch of the life of Fr. Mullooly, O. P., and an account of his work at S. Clemente, see « The Irish Dominicans in Rome ». Chap. VII. (S. Clemente).

spots which vary its surface of vivid green and pure white; it is considered an unique specimen of its kind in Italy. The second is of Parian marble; the third and fourth of Numidian; two others are of oriental granite; and the seventh of *Settebasi* of the rarest quality. Some of these columns have been deprived of their capitals. Their want of uniformity both in height and diametre shows that they must have been taken, according to the custom of the times, from various edifices of an earlier period, perhaps from porticoes or pagan temples <sup>1</sup>. Springing from these columns are arches which support the right or northern wall of the upper church - the subterranean basilica being wider than the upper by the width of this aisle, which is eighteen feet six inches. The columns might appear to stand upon a uniform plinth running along the aisle; but, in fact, it is a brick wall of the Imperial period. The three walls which run along the length of the church, two between the aisles and the nave, and one within the nave were built in the eleventh century in connection with the foundations of the upper church, and chiefly out of the débris of ruined temples and broken statues. At either end of the walls between nave and aisles are T shaped piers

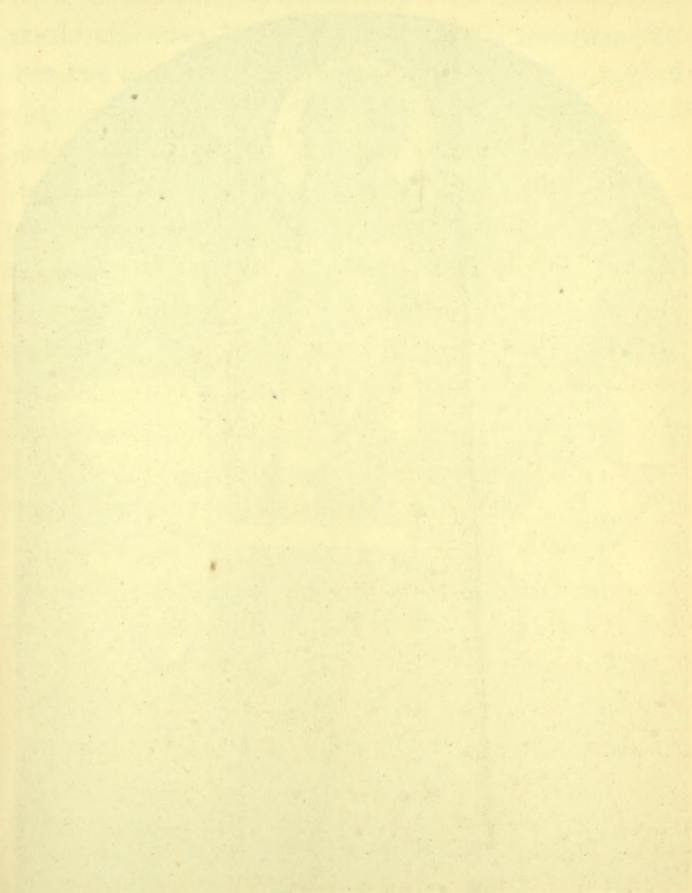
<sup>1</sup> Constantine, writing to a certain Bishop, says: « Let me know when the plans of the church are completed, so that I may order the columns for it to be collected from everywhere ».



of masonry belonging to the original construction. All these piers were once covered with frescoes, but from some of them the paintings have now almost entirely disappeared.

The whole of the right wall seems to have been covered with paintings, and, in some cases at least, even with a double layer of fresco. Comparatively little of all this artistic treasure now exists, but what we have is very interesting. The fresco on that part of the wall nearer the entrance was thought by Fr. Mullooly, with whom Professor Marucchi agreed, to represent the martyrdom of S. Catherine of Alexandria; while that on the other side of the niche he believed to represent the Council held in S. Clemente under Pope Zosimus in 417, for the condemnation of the Pelagian heretic Celestius<sup>1</sup>. Monsignor Wilpert, however, does not agree with Fr. Mullooly's interpretation of these two subjects. The paintings in the niche offer no difficulty. This niche which is six feet high, three wide, and sunk into the wall to the depth of eighteen in-

<sup>1</sup> In 417, Pope S. Zosimus wrote to S. Augustine and the African Bishops about the Pelagian heretic Celestius, who had appeared before a Council at Rome. « We sat », he says, « in the Basilica of S. Clemente, for he, imbued with the teaching of Blessed Peter the Apostle, had corrected ancient errors with such authority, and had made such progress, that the Faith which he had learned and taught he also consecrated by his martyrdom » (*Constant, Rom. Cont. Ep.*, p. 943).



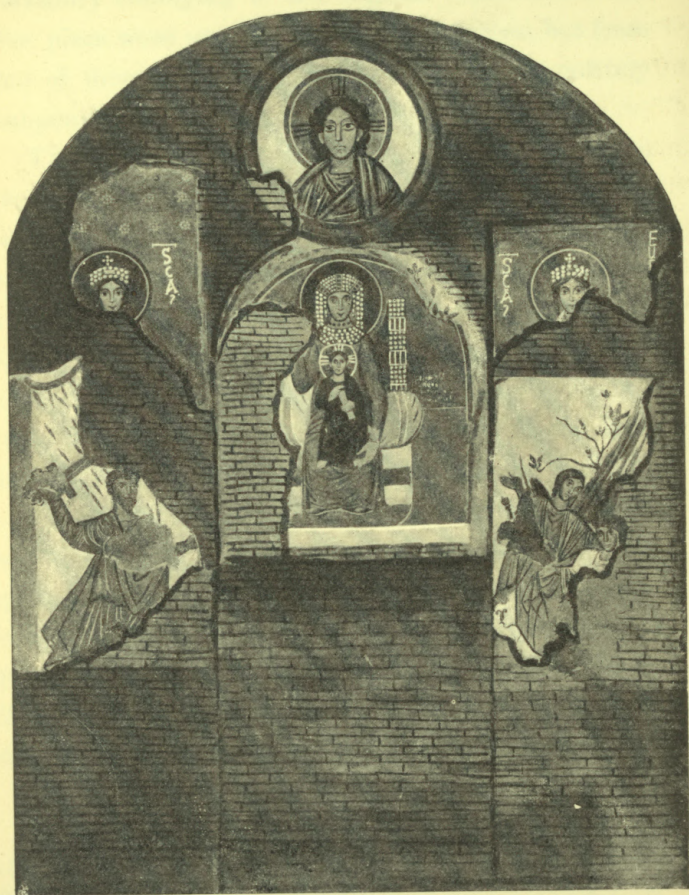
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Our Saviour, B. Virgin, etc.



ches, contains, says Fr. Mullooly <sup>1</sup>, the representatives of the Christian world: « Christ in His Incarnate Nature and in His glory; His Immaculate Mother, angels, virgins, martyrs, men, instruments of His Providence and heirs of His promise ». Our Lady with the Divine Infant in her arms is the central figure of the group; in the crown of the niche is a medallion of our Divine Lord radiant with glory. On the side to the right of the Blessed Virgin is the head of S. Catherine of Alexandria, and on the left that of S. Euphemia of Chalcedon. Below S. Catherine is Abraham brandishing a sword with his right hand, while in the left he holds a chalice of blood, and from a circle over his head a shower of blood is falling <sup>2</sup>. On the opposite side is Isaac being defended by an angel. At the left of the throne on which our Blessed Lady is seated are four horizontal lines of graffiti containing the names:

† JOAN. PRESB.

ROSA

BITALIS

† SABBIO PRESB. <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pag. 203.

<sup>2</sup> The plaster containing the representation of the chalice and shower of blood fell off soon after the discovery.

<sup>3</sup> It seems to have been an ancient custom for the priests and pious faithful to write their names where the holy Sacrifice had been offered. On the frescoes representing Pope S. Cornelius, and S. Cyprian, in the catacomb of S. Callistus, may still be read, scratched on the mortar in characters of the

Professor Marucchi thinks that this beautiful byzantine picture of the Madonna belongs to the sixth<sup>1</sup> or perhaps to the fifth century. Another layer of plaster with a fresco of the Madonna covered this, but it fell off immediately after the discovery.

Monsignor Wilpert devotes an interesting chapter of his little work to his interpretation of the subjects at either side of the niche. He argues forcibly, and to our mind rather convincingly, that the three compartments with the niche as centre-piece form one complete scene of the « Last Judgment »<sup>2</sup> comprising : the Resurrection, the Judgment itself, and the Exit from the Judgment.

Setting aside, but not rejecting, the possibility of two subjects of different dates commingling here, we give briefly the learned archaeologist's interpretation of the whole scene. The part to our right which Fr. Mull-ooly believed to represent the martyrdom of S. Cath-

seventh century, the names of visitors to the tombs of these saints. The names of two priests are written thus :

† LEO PRB. JOANNIS PRB.

<sup>1</sup> It might well belong to that period of the sixth century when Pope John II. decorated the church of S. Clemente with the « Schola Cantorum », &c.

<sup>2</sup> As early as 1859 this scene was believed to be a representation of the Last Judgment. See Munôz, *Nuovo Bullett.* (1907, p. 309) *Christliches Kuntsblatt*, 1859, n. 12, p. 96.



(fot. Anderson).

Blessed Virgin and Divine Infant.





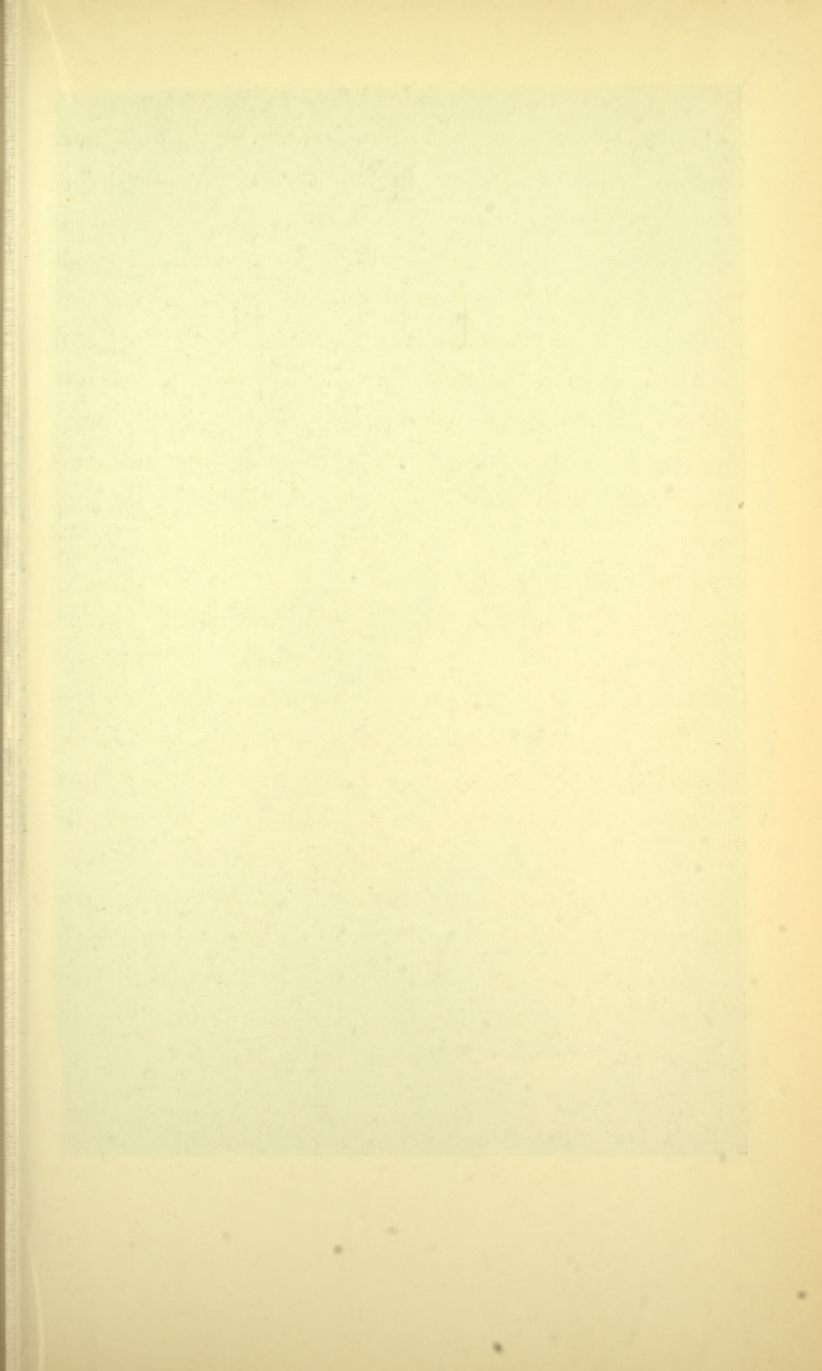
rine, he interprets to be hell, the damned, and the demons; and the letters KA, written high up in the picture, which Fr. Mullooly read as the first letters of *KAterine* Monsignor Wilpert regards as the first letters of *KAiphas*, and the letters AN close by, are, he thinks, the first of *ANnas*; hence he infers that Herod and Judas cannot be far off. Satan himself with the cloven foot and human body is to be seen at the right of the breach in the wall, near what Fr. Mullooly regarded as S. Catherine being tortured at the wheel, but what Monsignor Wilpert interprets as one of the damned tormented by a serpent. On the left of the niche, Monsignor Wilpert sees, instead of a Council scene, the Celestial City and its inhabitants. The angels, and with them the Archangel Raphael, are around the niche calling the dead to judgment. Above the niche and the compartments right and left of it, are seated the twelve Apostles on twelve thrones judging, with the Divine Judge, the dead risen from their tombs. Of this portion of the fresco only the lower parts of three thrones and the feet of three or four of the Apostles are still preserved. Underneath, and separated from them by a black line, are to be seen at the right of the Divine Judge the blessed in the heavenly Jerusalem, and on the left the damned in hell. The niche in the centre indicates the place of an altar, and separates heaven from hell. The principal figures in the

niche have an intimate relation with the holy Sacrifice of the Mass. In the recess is the Blessed Virgin with the Divine Child; the Saviour of the world is at the summit of the arch; while the walls are in great part occupied with the sacrifice of Abraham the accepted type of the bloody sacrifice on Calvary, as also of the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass. It is, continues Monsignor Wilpert, a sublime concept to put so prominently, in a picture of the « Last Judgment », the sacrifice of the Mass; to separate heaven from hell by means of the altar and the most solemn type of the Passion.

Mons. Wilpert thinks that this fresco was painted in the time of Pope Leo IV., about the year 850, and is, consequently, older, by two centuries, than the oldest fresco of the « Last Judgment » hitherto known, that namely of S. George's in the Island of Richenau in Lake Constance, which was painted about the middle of the eleventh century. Hence our fresco is, he says, of great value both in general for mediæval iconography, and in particular for the subject which it represents; and, we may add, that both the historian of Christian art, and the theologian engaged in the defence of Catholic truth are indebted to it <sup>1</sup>.

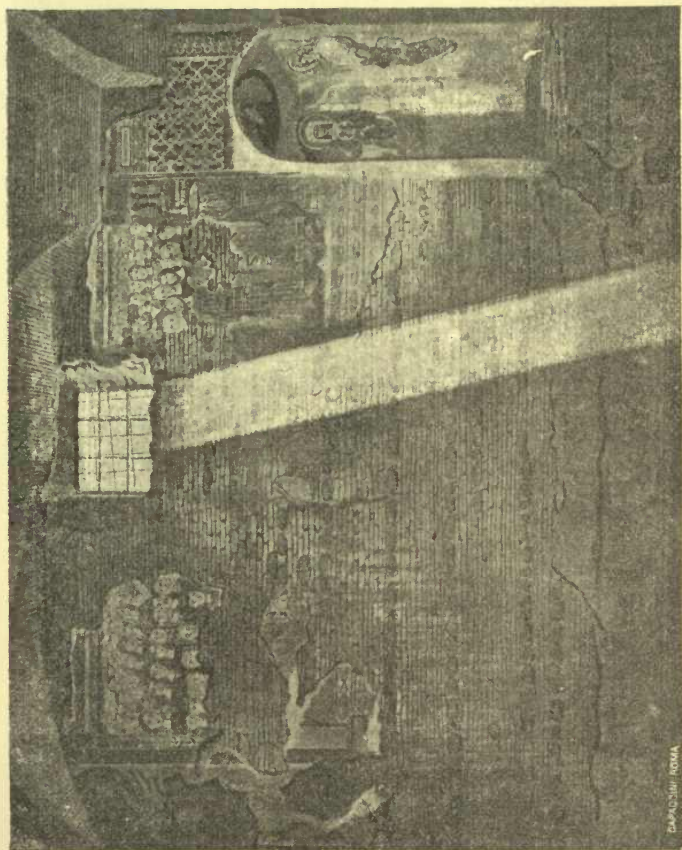
<sup>1</sup> An artist of the ninth century named Methodius (not S. Methodius the brother of S. Cyril, also of the ninth century) painted a terrifying « Last Judgment » for the Bulga-







The Last Judgment — The Damned ?



The Last Judgment — The Elect (?)





Beyond this last fresco and as far as the ancient tribune of the church the wall was covered with a series of subjects, probably a line of saints, such as we still see in the church of Santa Maria Antiqua in the Roman Forum, the frescoes of which belong, it is believed, to the same period as the earlier ones of S. Clemente, and were probably executed by the same artist, or same school of artists.

Ascending by three steps to the tribune where remains of the old pavement still exist, we see on the wall to the right a large figure of our Divine Lord, but the head and shoulders are wanting. He is wearing sandals and standing on a jewelled footstool. In His left hand He holds a book on which the fingers of His right rest. This fresco was apparently painted over another representing an identical subject, for above the book referred to appears another book held in the right hand of another figure, probably of the Saviour.

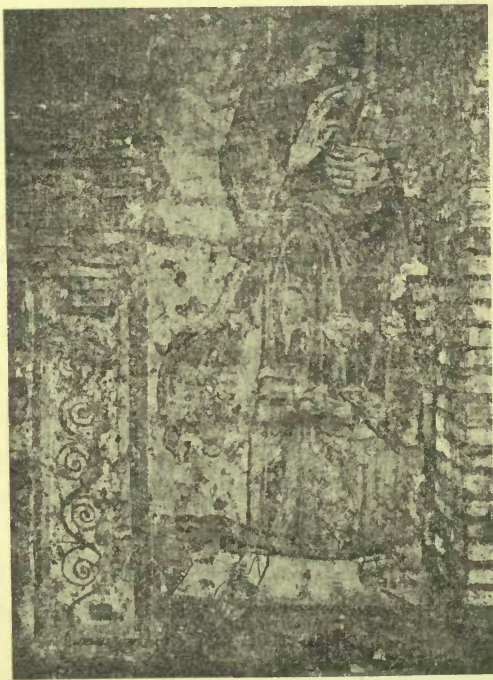
Farther on and near the stairs leading to the ambulacrum and the old walls is an inscription of which only the following part can be deciphered:

QUISQUIS HAS MEI NOMINIS LITERAS  
LEGERIS LECTOR DIC INDIGNO JOANNI  
MISERERE DEUS.

rians. As this Methodius is supposed to have worked also in Rome, it is possible that he is the painter of our fresco on the same subject.

*Whoever reads these letters of my name let him say: God have mercy on unworthy John.*

On a pier at the opposite side of the aisle are fragments of ornament in fresco. The fresco is within



Our Saviour.

an enclosure which may be the remains of a sacristy, and we know that such sacristies existed in the early



christian basilicas close to the apse, occupying a position almost identical with the modern lateral apses situated at the end of the side aisles and flanking the principal apse. On the other side of this pier,



(fot. Anderson).

#### Descent into Limbo.

that is, on the side facing the nave, is a fresco of our Saviour in Limbo. He is surrounded by a *vesica* and holds the Cross in His left hand, while with the right He grasps the hand of Adam, around whom are to be seen little faces. A large hand, probably that of Eve, is stretched out towards the Redeemer. The rest of this picture

to the right has disappeared with the plaster on which it was painted. The left foot of our Saviour presses on Satan who is spitting fire and holding Adam by the foot. Here we have represented the triumph of our Divine Saviour over Satan.

On the left of the last picture is a venerable person with a book in his left hand; the right is open and raised to his breast. Professor Marucchi thinks that it represents a Pope; but Monsignor Wilpert is of opinion that it is a monk, probably an abbot, who had selected this place for his tomb <sup>1</sup>.

The wall to our left was built in the eleventh century to support the row of columns between the nave and right aisle of the upper church, and it is continued into the ancient apse. The nave of the subterranean church being equal in width to both nave and right aisle of the present church (52 ft. 3 1/2 in.), its apse was therefore larger than that of the latter, hence an apsidal or semicircular foundation had to be constructed in the subterranean church for the support of the apse in

<sup>1</sup> A monastery was attached to the Basilica of S. Clemente in the ninth century, and Monsignor Wilpert, p. 50, thinks that S. Cyril died a monk of this monastery. Pope S. Gregory the Great (590-604) gave the Benedictine monks charge of the Basilica of S. Clemente; these were succeeded by Canons, who in turn were succeeded by the monks of S. Ambrose ad Nemus. After the suppression of these monks by Pope Urban VIII, the monastery and basilica were handed over to the Irish Dominicans.

the upper church. We have consequently two apses in the ancient church, but only one, namely its own proper one, interests us here.



## Ancient apse and nave.

Leaving the fresco of the Descent into Limbo we pass through a narrow passage into the ancient apse, the brickwork of which belongs to the time of Constantine. Turning to our left through an opening in the eleventh century wall we reach a passage between the ancient and modern apses. Here, through an iron grating in the floor, we see part of the great palace within which, and directly beneath us, is the « *Dominicum Clementis* ».

We now pass into the eleventh century apse with its high altar, built by Fr. Mullooly and consecrated by Cardinal Guidi, O. P. in 1868. Extending from the altar to about the middle of the nave are two rows of piers, six in each, which were built during the excavations to sustain the weight of the marble choir in the upper church. In this part of the nave may be seen the raised site of that choir which once adorned it, and which now contributes to the beauty of the upper church. In front of the altar is a marble slab



indicating the existence of a mortuary vault underneath, constructed also by Fr. Mullooly. Four other piers in a single row complete the support of the nave of the present basilica.

To appreciate the size and grandeur of this old nave, we should stand at the entrance to it from the narthex and try to imagine it without all those stacks of masonry which now necessarily encumber its sides and centre; we must try and recall in fancy the old spacious apse with its high altar the beauty of which may be inferred from the two pillars which alone remain. We must remember, too, that the beautiful marble choir of the upper church once stood here, with the other marbles in exquisite design which adorned the floor. Only thus can we form an adequate picture of the ancient basilica as it was a thousand years ago.



## Fresco of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.

On one of the walls built between the pillars separating the narthex from the nave, and on the side facing the nave, is a fresco the subject of which causes some little difficulty. Fr. Mullooly and Professor Ma-

rucchi interpreted it as representing the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, while Monsignor Wilpert<sup>1</sup> thinks that it represents the Ascension of our Divine Lord into Heaven, a subject which was, he says, a favourite one in mediæval art. The opinion of Monsignor Wilpert is not by any means original<sup>2</sup>, but his analysis of the picture is, we believe, peculiar to himself. He says that Leo IV. who, according to the inscription, had the picture painted, did no more than add the two lateral figures and the stone representing the tomb in the centre. The picture then, according to Monsignor Wilpert, originally represented the Ascension, and Leo IV. made a change by introducing two new figures and a tomb; and he adds, logically enough, that Leo's inscription is consequently exaggerated. But if Leo did no more than make the additions attributed to him, is it not sufficiently evident that he made them for a purpose, which could be no other than to convert the picture of the Ascension into that of the Assumption, otherwise why introduce a tomb? Taking the fresco therefore as it stands, we must regard it, even in the light of Monsignor Wilpert's interpretation,

<sup>1</sup> Page 57.

<sup>2</sup> P. Raffaele Garrucci (« Storia dell' Arte Cristiana » - Vol. III; 1876), whom Monsignor Wilpert seems to follow in his treatment of many controverted subjects in art, also held that this picture represents the Ascension.

as representing, since the ninth century, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. The fact, too, that the pose of the two lateral figures - SS. Leo and Vitus - is different from that of the Apostles does not militate in the least against our interpretation of the subject, for it is a general principle, admitted in regard to mediæval art, that figures which are foreign to the scene have a different pose from that of those proper to it. Hence the immobility of the figures of SS. Leo and Vitus, in contrast to the gesticulating attitude of the other figures of the scene.

In the fresco, our Saviour is seated on His starry throne surrounded by a *vesica* supported by four angels. In His left hand He holds a book while His right is open and extended. Below are the Apostles who, finding the tomb empty, are gazing in various attitudes of emotion and surprise on her who is being taken up towards heaven. S. Vitus with the circular nimbus and holding a small cross in his hand stands at the extreme end to our right; his name SCS VITUS is written vertically near his head. At the corresponding extremity to the left is Pope S. Leo IV. (847-855), with the square nimbus which indicates that the saint was living at the time the picture was painted. His name :

SANCTISSIMUS DOM. LEO (Q)RT PP. ROMANUS





(fot. Anderson)

The Assumption of the B. V. Mary.



is written near his head. Below the picture is the inscription :

QUOD HAEC PRAE CUNCTIS SPLENDET  
PICTURA DECORE COMPOSERE HANC  
STUDUIT PRAESBYTER ECCE LEO.

*That this picture may outshine the rest in beauty behold ! the priest Leo laboured to compose it <sup>1</sup> .*

S. Leo seems to have had a particular devotion to the mystery of the Assumption, for he ordered the octave day of that feast to be observed with great solemnity ; whereas according to the *Liber Pontificalis* it had not been so kept before his time in Rome. While still a simple priest Leo was attached to the Church of the Quattro Coronati near S. Clemente, and when Pope he made the latter basilica the recipient of many rich presents ; hence we can understand why he put up this fresco here <sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> May we not infer from this inscription that other pictures existed in the basilica at the time that Leo laboured to make *this one* outshine the « rest » in beauty ?

<sup>2</sup> It may be of interest to some of our readers to know that King Alfred the Great, the only English Sovereign to receive unction in Rome from the hands of the Pope, received it from Pope S. Leo IV., in 853.



On two narrow fillets running parallel to the above inscription are scratched the names :

HIER. EGO MERCURIUS, MERCURIUS PRESB. PETRUS LURISSA.  
 URSUS PRESB. XXX NOVEMBRIS OBIT KALALEO  
 † SALBIUS PRESB. FLORI . FLORUS PRESB. S. THEODORI 1.  
 JOANNES PRESB. DE TITU . EGO RUFINUS PRESB.  
 VEN. DOM. CLEMENS PRESB. GEORGIUS.  
 EGO MERCURIUS PRESB.

The priests John and Salbius may be the same who scratched their names in the niche of the Madonna in the north aisle.



## Frescoes of the Crucifixion, etc.

To the right of the fresco of the Assumption is one of the T shaped piers of the original construction ; on the two sides facing the nave, a series of subjects is painted. First we have the Crucifixion in which Our Saviour is represented fastened to the Cross and still alive ; His Blessed Mother is appealing to Him ; while S. John, with the Gospel roll, stretches out a supplicating hand. Below this, in a separate panel, was another picture of which only a very

Crucifixion

<sup>1</sup> S. Theodore at the foot of the Palatine Hill.



The Crucifixion. — Holy Women at the Sepulchre.  
Descent into Limbo. — Marriage Feast at Cana.





small fragment now remains. At right angles to these are three subjects in three different panels. The one at the top represents the holy women at the Tomb of Our Saviour before which a lamp is burning; an angel at the other side informs the holy women that the Master is not there, « He is risen, He is not here » (S. Mark XVI, 6). Both women have the nimbus and hold boxes in their hands, apparently containing the spices and the ointment wherewith to anoint their Beloved. In the centre panel is our Saviour, surrounded by the *vesica*, descending into Limbo. He is grasping by the hand Adam who seems to be reclining while Eve is standing with both hands stretched out towards the Redeemer supplicating for herself the fruits of His Passion and Death. In the lower compartment is depicted the Marriage feast at Cana. In the centre of the group is our Saviour with the nimbus and rays; beside Him stands His Blessed Mother, also with the nimbus; and to her left is apparently the master of the feast; the word *architriclinus* is written vertically above his head. It is probable that other pictures representing mysteries or miracles of our Divine Lord were painted in the upper portion of the pier.

It is difficult to determine the date of these frescoes; but they are thought to belong to the period

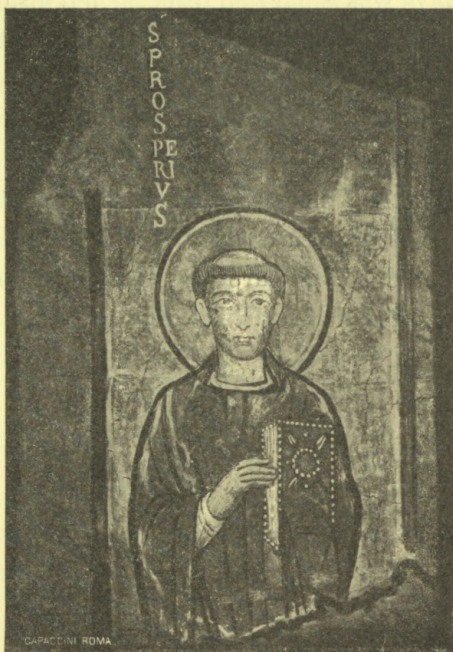
between the seventh and middle of the ninth centuries. They were certainly painted before that of the Assumption for that part of the pier against which the wall with the fresco of the Assumption was built contains traces of fresco at a point where some stones have been removed at the junction of pier and wall.

At the end of the same pier, between the nave and left aisle, is represented S. Prosper of Aquitaine.

**S. Prosper.** S. Prosper, born about the year 403, was a disciple of S. Augustine, and one of the greatest opponents of the Pelagian heresy. About the year 431 he wrote a poem entitled « The Ungrateful », by which he meant the semi-pelagians who were ungrateful to divine grace, though they were not then cut off from the communion of the Church. This work, the masterpiece of the Saint who was the author of many valuable compositions, is written in excellent verse. In it he says that the See of Peter, fixed at Rome, presides over the whole world, possessing by religion what it (Rome) had never subdued by arms.<sup>1</sup> When S. Leo the Great was chosen to fill the See of Peter in the year 440, he invited S. Prosper to Rome and made him his secretary. Our

<sup>1</sup> « Pestem subeuntem prima recidit  
Sedis Roma Petri, quae pastoralis honoris  
Facta caput mundo, quicquid non possidet armis.  
Religione tenet ». Carmen « De Ingratis ».

fresco reminds us of the awful scenes which Rome witnessed at this epoch, when it was invaded by At-



S. Prosper of Aquitaine.

tila and Genseric, and of the successful efforts of Pope S. Leo to avert the terrible evils which then beset the Eternal City and Italy in general <sup>1</sup>. Of these events

<sup>1</sup> The final salvation of Italy at this epoch is one of the grandest and most solemn events in history, and is inseparably linked with the name of the great Pope S. Leo I.



S. Prosper has been the most eloquent and reliable chronicler.

The nave was separated from the left aisle by eight columns, only five of which remain, and of these, two are broken and embedded in brick piers on which the two remaining votive pictures, one of S. Alexius, and the other of S. Clement celebrating Mass, are painted. Two of the other three columns are of beautiful *bigio* marble, one is plain, and the other of spiral form.

In front of the picture of S. Alexius, on the floor, is a marble slab with the inscription:

DEPOSITUS LEONAS VI KAL. FEB. IN PACE.

Here are also fragments of the old pavement, some of the exquisite designs of which are still traceable. Many saints have trod that ancient pavement from the days of Pope S. Damasus to those of Pope S. Gregory VII.



## Fresco of S. Alexius.

The fresco of S. Alexius is divided into three compartments. In the upper one our Divine Saviour is

seated on a rich throne holding in His hands a book on which is written :

FORTIS UT VINCULA MORTIS

*Strong as the bonds of death.*

S. Michael is on His right and S. Gabriel on the left both holding thuribles. S. Clement is at the extreme right of our Saviour and S. Nicholas at the extreme left. The upper portion of this fresco also has disappeared.

The lowest panel contains ornamental work of rare taste and beauty. Flowers, and fruits, and birds of the richest plumage form the principal subjects of the composition. An exquisite scroll separates this from the central panel which contains the history of S. Alexius.

S. Alexius

Alexius was the son of a rich noble Roman Senator named Euphemianus who occupied a sumptuous palace on the Aventine Hill which looked down, at one side, upon the Tiber at the *Ripa Grande*, the port of ancient Rome, and at the other upon the Circus Maximus, the Palatine Hill, and the Coliseum, while away in the distance rose up the hills of Latium. In this palace Alexius was born towards the end of the fourth century. Reared in affluence, and at liberty to enjoy all the pleasures that wealth could procure, the young scion of that great house sighed rather for a life of quiet and of retirement; but his wordly-minded parents, disregarding his own

wishes, persuaded him to marry. No sooner however was the marriage contracted than Alexius, overcome by the long-cherished desire to be alone and to be with God, fled from his palace, his wealth, and his bride, and sought instead an austere, a poor, an eremitical life which he found and embraced in a hut near the church of our Lady at Edessa, where he lived for many years. At length he returned to his father's house, not as a prodigal but as a holy mendicant begging for a place whereon to lay his head, and at the same time resolved on continuing his austere manner of life. His parents not recognising their only child, received him into their palace where he passed the remainder of his life, taking his scanty rest under the staircase, until death revealed to his parents the child of their affections, and to his wife the object of her long expectation. As he lay on his bed of death the bells of the neighbouring church began to toll of their own accord, and Euphemianus, startled by this marvellous occurrence, sought an explanation of it from the Pope who came himself in person to see the holy pilgrim who was, apparently, the object of the miraculous tolling of the bells. Alexius had given up his soul to God when Pope Boniface arrived; but he still held in his hand with the firm grasp of death a manuscript which the Pope alone succeeded in releasing. He read it and it contained an account of the life of the pil-





(fot. Anderson)

S. Alexius.



grim who was then, and not till then when death had already claimed him for its own, recognised by father, mother, and wife. Thus ended the life of Alexius who, for having renounced all the riches and pleasures of the world for the sake of Jesus Christ, was reputed mad by his friends and acquaintances; but he bequeathed to the world and to the City of the Pope's in particular an imperishable name, and to him has been dedicated, on the site of his father's palace on the Aventine, a church which is as beautiful as it is interesting, and in which is still preserved part of the stairs under which the saint died. His feast is kept on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July.

In the picture we see Alexius in the garb of a pilgrim with wallet and staff meeting Euphemianus who is on horse-back and followed by two attendants. The pilgrim is evidently begging hospitality, and Euphemianus in reply is pointing towards the palace, from the balcony of which a lady is looking out. The next scene represents the pilgrim lifeless, and Pope Boniface (*B...PHATIUS*)<sup>1</sup>, who is attended by his clergy and cross-bearer, is leaning over him and blessing with one hand while with the other he is extracting a manuscript from the hand of the dead man. Euphemianus with sorrowful countenance stands close by. The third

<sup>1</sup> S. Boniface I. governed the Church from 418 to 423.



scene represents the Pope standing erect with a scroll in his hand bearing the words:

VENITE AD ME OMNES QUI LABORATIS.

*Come to me all you that labour.*

Aptly is the text chosen, for in front of the Pope the body of Alexius, now recognised by all, is placed on a bier, while his bride, the same whom we see looking from the balcony in the first scene, kisses his cheek now cold in death. Behind her stand the parents in a frenzy of grief. Thus the scene concludes.

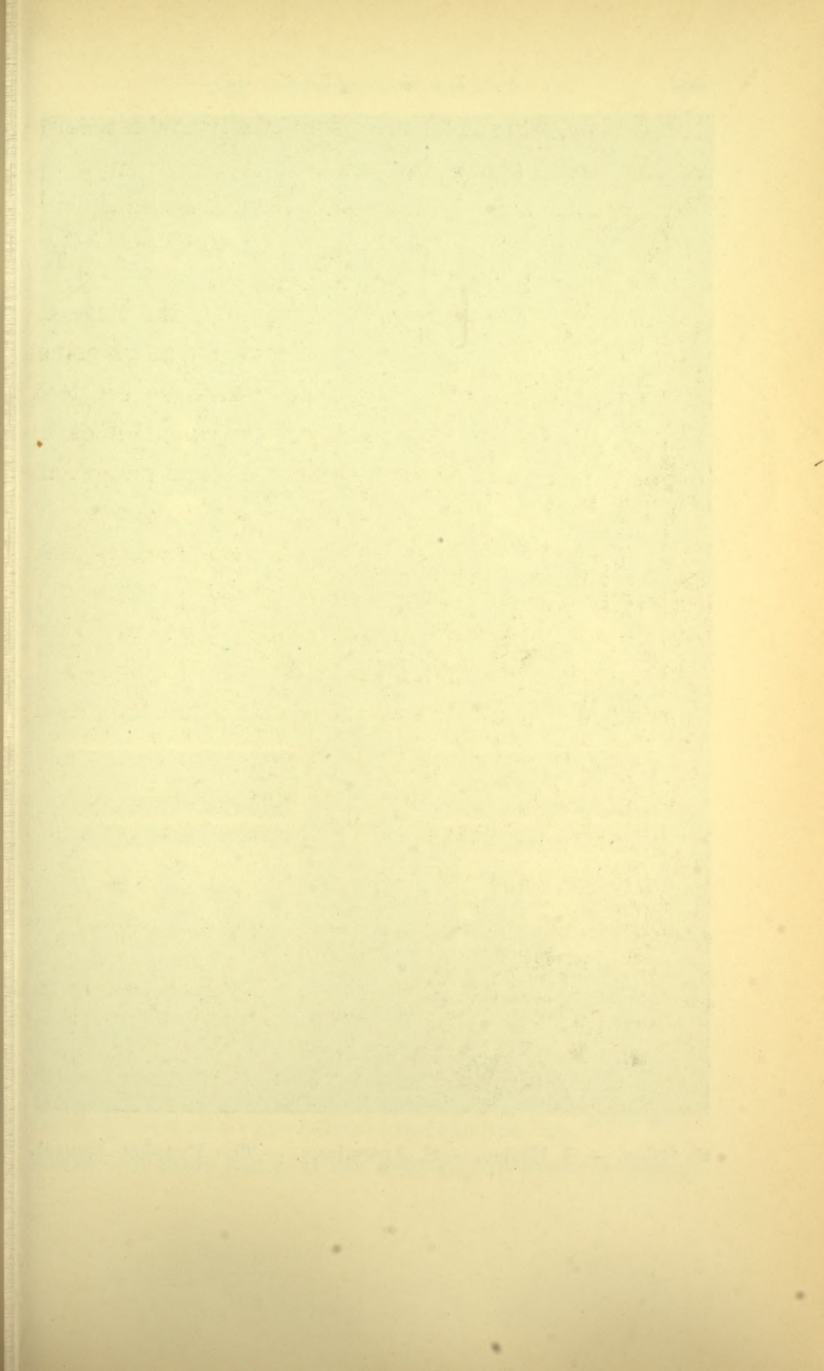
The last two scenes are represented as taking place apparently in a church from the vault of which four lamps are suspended. Alexius and the Pope are represented with the nimbus. The pall over the bier is ornamented with birds and crosses. Beneath the picture in a single line are the words:

NON PAT. AGNOSCIT MISERERI Q̄. SIBI POSCIT. PAPA TENET CARTA. VITA. QUE NUNTIAT ARTAM. <sup>1</sup>

*The father does not recognise him who seeks charity. The Pope holds the scroll which tells the story of the life he has led.* <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this inscription we have a striking example of the terseness with which the subject of the picture was explained by the painters of the middle ages.

<sup>2</sup> S. Alexius is the subject of Cardinal Wiseman's delightful little drama « The Hidden Gem ». For a time critics doubted the story of S. Alexius; our fresco proves that a thousand years ago the story was not doubted.





S. Giles. — S. Blaise. — S. Antoninus. — The Prophet Daniel.



The left side of this pier is also frescoed, and is divided into three compartments, the upper one of which

contains part of the figure of S. Egidius or  
**S. Giles.**

Giles. The central one represents S. Blaise

(*Blasius*) extracting a thorn from the throat of a child

who is attended by an afflicted mother.  
**S. Blaise.**

S. Blaise whose feast is celebrated on

the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January, is venerated especially by per-

sons suffering from throat troubles. An exquisite little

border of honey-suckle separates this from the lower

panel in which a wolf is represented bearing away

a pig, a detail to which reference is made in the life

of S. Blaise.

The corresponding side of the next pier also

contains a series of three frescoes. The upper com-

partment represents S. Antoninus dressed in sacer-

dotal vestments. It is difficult to say which of the var-

ious martyrs of this name is here depict- **S. Anto-**

ed; but from its close proximity to the first **ninus.**

occupants of the Chair of Peter in the fresco on the

front of the same pier, it may be supposed to be the

S. Antoninus who was mart red in the reign of Do-

mitian. In the centre panel is the Prophet Daniel dress-

ed in the Roman toga and having the ephod **Daniel**

on his breast. He is in prayer with hands **in the**

outstretched and eyes raised towards heaven **lions'den.**

while two lions jump at his feet. In the lower compart-

ment, which is separated from the central by an artistic border, a den containing a group of five lions is represented; four of them with open mouths and ferocious aspect are in the act of springing upwards, and they thus form an admirable contrast to the serenity of the Prophet. These five lions and the two in the centre panel are so badly drawn that Fr. Mullooly aptly says that the artist can never have seen a lion. The last two series of frescoes belong to the same date and are the work of the same artist as the two great votive pictures with which they are respectively associated.



## Fresco of S. Clement celebrating Mass, etc.

We have now come to the last of the votive frescoes, and one of the best preserved and most important in the basilica. Like the others it is tripartite, and in it also, part of the upper compartment is missing. But enough remains to enable us to know the subject, and Monsignor Wilpert has even been able to reconstruct the whole picture from what still exists. It contains at least nine figures, the names of four of

which are given. S. Clement wearing the pallium, is seated on a rich throne in the centre, while the Prince of the Apostles who is turned towards him has the left foot on the foot-stool of the throne, and seems to be investing S. Clement with the supreme authority. Behind S. Peter stands Linus in episcopal robes, and behind him again another Bishop. At the left of S. Clement is Cletus, also in episcopal vestments, and he seems to be assisting S. Peter. Behind Cletus stands another Bishop, and at either extreme end stands a Roman soldier. Beneath the throne are the words:

SCS CLEMENS PP.

*S. Clement, Pope.*

According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, S. Peter consecrated Linus and Cletus Assistant Bishops; but Clement he not only consecrated but also designated as his successor. This scene then agrees with the account in the *Liber Pontificalis* and with the opinion said to be held by Tertullian<sup>1</sup> and others that S. Clement was the first successor of S. Peter in the Apostolic See. But on the other hand we have the authority of several of the

<sup>1</sup> Tertullian does not appear to have stated positively that S. Clement was the immediate successor of S. Peter. He says that S. Clement was ordained by S. Peter. *De Praescr. Haer.* 32 (A. D. 200).



Fathers of the Church, as well as the Canon of the Mass, for putting Clement in the third and not in the first place after S. Peter. S. Irenaeus, who was the disciple of S. Polycarp who was in turn the disciple of S. John the Evangelist, says of S. Clement: « In the *third place*<sup>1</sup> after the Apostles the Roman Episcopate received Clement, who had seen the Princes of the Apostles, had associated with them, had listened to their sermons, and had the Apostolic tradition before his eyes ». Ciacconius, Oldoinus, and others, say that S. Clement was nominated by S. Peter as his immediate successor, but either through humility or divine inspiration he did not accept the dignity until after the martyrdom of Cletus. The exact order of the early Pontiffs after S. Peter is at present impossible to determine, but writers of Ecclesiastical history generally make Clement the fourth occupant of the Apostolic See.

The central compartment of the fresco represents the interior of a church from the arches of which seven lamps are suspended. One of these lamps, namely that over the altar, is circular in shape and contains seven lights, symbolising, probably, the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. Anastasius the Librarian, who lived in the ninth century, speaks of such a lamp and calls it *PHARUM cum corona*. « A pharos with a crown », a crown from its shape,

S. Clement  
celebrating  
Mass.

<sup>1</sup> The italics are ours.



(fot. Anderson

S. Clement enthroned by S. Peter.  
S. Clement celebrating Mass. — Sisinius.





and a pharos or light-house from its illuminating power, and says that it was in common use in Christian churches. S. Clement in pontifical robes and with the maniple between the thumb and fore-finger of the left hand, is officiating at the altar, over which his name *SCS CLEMENS PAPA* is written in the form of a cross. On the altar, which is covered with a white cloth, are the missal, chalice, and paten. The missal is open, and on one page are written the words: *Dominus vobiscum* which the saint is in the act of pronouncing while his hands are extended as is done today by the celebrant at the same words of the Mass. On the other page are the words: *Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum* which the saint himself is believed to have introduced into the liturgy. At the right of S. Clement are two bishops with croziers in their hands, also a deacon and subdeacon. All are tonsured, and the subdeacon holds the thurible and incense boat. In front of the ministers are a man and woman both holding in their hands lighted twisted tapers, called by Anastasius *Kerostota*. The name *BENO* is written beside the man whom we recognise as the donor of the picture of the « Miracle at the Tomb of S. Clement » ; the lady is *MARIA*, his wife, as we learn from the inscription :

EGO BENO DE RAPIZA CŪ MARIA UXOR MEA  
P. AMORE DEI ET BEATI CLEMENTIS.

and then written vertically at the right are the letters :

P. G. R. F. C.

*I, Beno De Rapiza and my wife Mary, for the love of God and S. Clement caused it to be painted.*

On the left of the altar in the picture is a group of persons two of whom are specially prominent and have their names THEODORA and SISINIUS written at their feet. Mombricitus and other early writers tell us that Theodora was the wife of Sisinius and that both were attached to the court of the Emperor Nerva, that they were converted to the true faith by S. Clement, and afterwards suffered martyrdom. In the scene before us Sisinius seems to be blind and is being led out of the church by an attendant. Of this scene and of its continuation in the lower panel we find the following explanation in the so-called *Martyrium Clementis*<sup>1</sup>: On a certain day while Theodora was assisting at the Mass of S. Clement by whom she had been converted to the faith of Christ, her unbelieving husband Sisinius with his servants entered the church. Sisinius came to mock ; but, at the prayer of S. Clement, the mocker was instantly struck blind and deaf ; and realising the punishment he had received for his unholy

<sup>1</sup> It was written probably in the time of Constantine the Great. See Funk, *Patres Apostolici*, vol. II, pp. 30-35.

intrusion he ordered his servants to lead him out immediately. They promptly prepared to obey but could not find an exit, and after wandering for some time round the church they came to the place where Theodora was praying, and informed her of all that had happened. Theodora without changing her posture begged God to have pity on them and to permit them to depart. Having finished her prayer, she turned to the servants and bade them to conduct her husband home. At the conclusion of the service Theodora made known to S. Clement the affliction that had befallen her husband, and besought his assistance. The saint prayed, and sight and hearing were restored to Sisinius; but that ungrateful man, in return for the favour, accused the saint of being a magician and of exercising his art for evil purposes. And being determined on having revenge he commanded his servants to seize Clement and bind him fast; but the ministers of this base injunction became at that moment so confounded that they took hold of a column instead, and this they dragged hither and thither believing with their master that it was the B. Clement. The saint, seeing their new blindness and confusion said to Sisinius: « *Duritia cordis tui in lapides conversa est quia enim lapides vultas esse deos lapides trahere sortitus es* ». — « The hardness of your heart has been turned to stones;



because you believe stones to be gods, you are condemned to drag stones ».

The pagan Sisinius being still more enraged by this fresh disappointment resolved to destroy Clement and to make him an example for all magicians ; but the saint, filled with compassion for the still mentally blind Sisinius, set himself to pray with Theodora that her husband might be enlightened. Towards evening a venerable man appeared to Theodora and addressed her thus : « Because of you, Sisinius will be healed (in soul) that the words of my brother Paul may be fulfilled ; *for the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife* » <sup>1</sup>. Sisinius, struck with remorse, sent for Clement whom he received most kindly, and whom he begged to instruct him in the truths of religion, and he with all his house-hold embraced the faith of Christ.

In the picture we see the blind Sisinius being led out of the church ; and in the lower panel we see the servants blindly dragging about the column which they believe to be Pope S. Clement. Over the figure to the left are the words in corrupt Latin :

FALLITE DE RETO COLO PALO CARVONCELLE  
which may be translated :

*Get behind with a lever Carvoncele.*

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. VII, 14.

Over the second figure are the words:

ALBERTEL TRAI

*Pull, Albertel*

and over the third:

COSMARIS

and between Cosmaris and Sisinius, who occupies the extreme right are the words:

FILI DELLE PUTE TRAITTE.

which for their grossness do not bear translation. Over the column are the words;

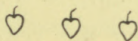
DURITIAM CORDIS VESTRIS SAXA TRAERE  
MERUISTI.

*Because of the hardness of your hearts you have merited to draw stones.*

All these expressions <sup>1</sup> seem to have been addressed to the servants by Sisinius.

A handsome scroll divides the lower from the central panel.

<sup>1</sup> These forms are interesting to the philological student as exemplifying the transition from Latin to Italian. In fact they may be regarded as the earliest known Italian inscriptions.



## Left Aisle.

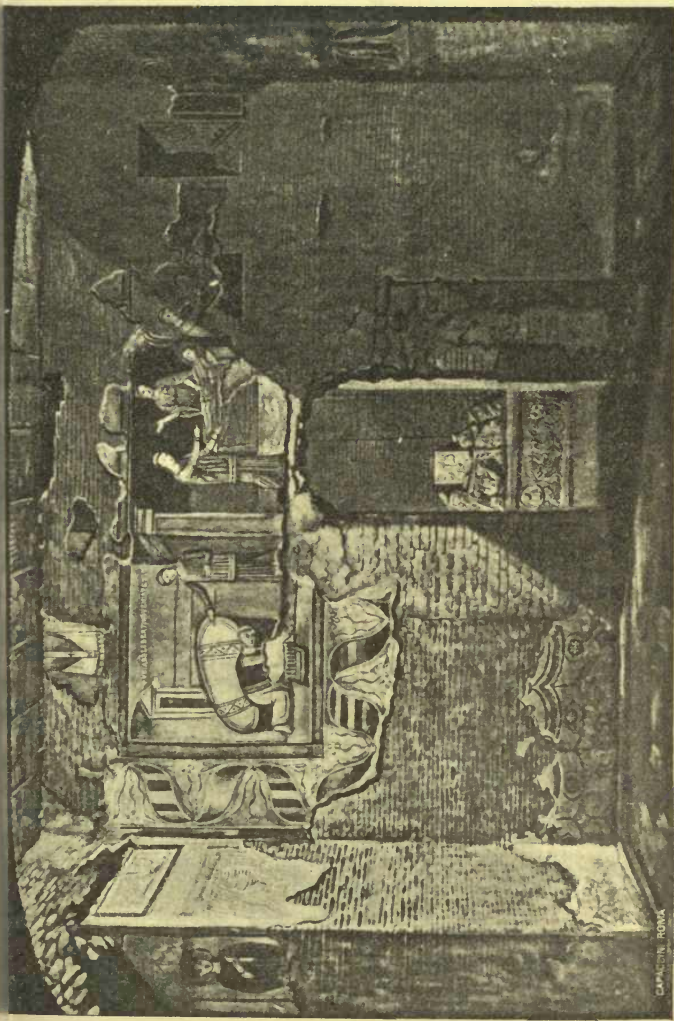
In the left aisle on the wall over the entrance from the narthex were painted several subjects some of which have altogether disappeared. Of those that remain we have at the left a monk with the nimbus; he carries a book in his hands. At the top near the centre is the lower half of a figure representing an Archbishop or a Pope vested in pontifical robes. The centre is occupied by a series of subjects taken from the *Dialogues of S. Gregory* (I, I, c. II, III) as we learn from an inscription in the panel containing the first of the series. This picture represents Libertinus, a monk of the Benedictine Abbey of Fondi; his Abbot is begging his forgiveness for having unjustly treated him. Overhead are the words:

UBI ABB. LIBERTINO VENIA PETIT.

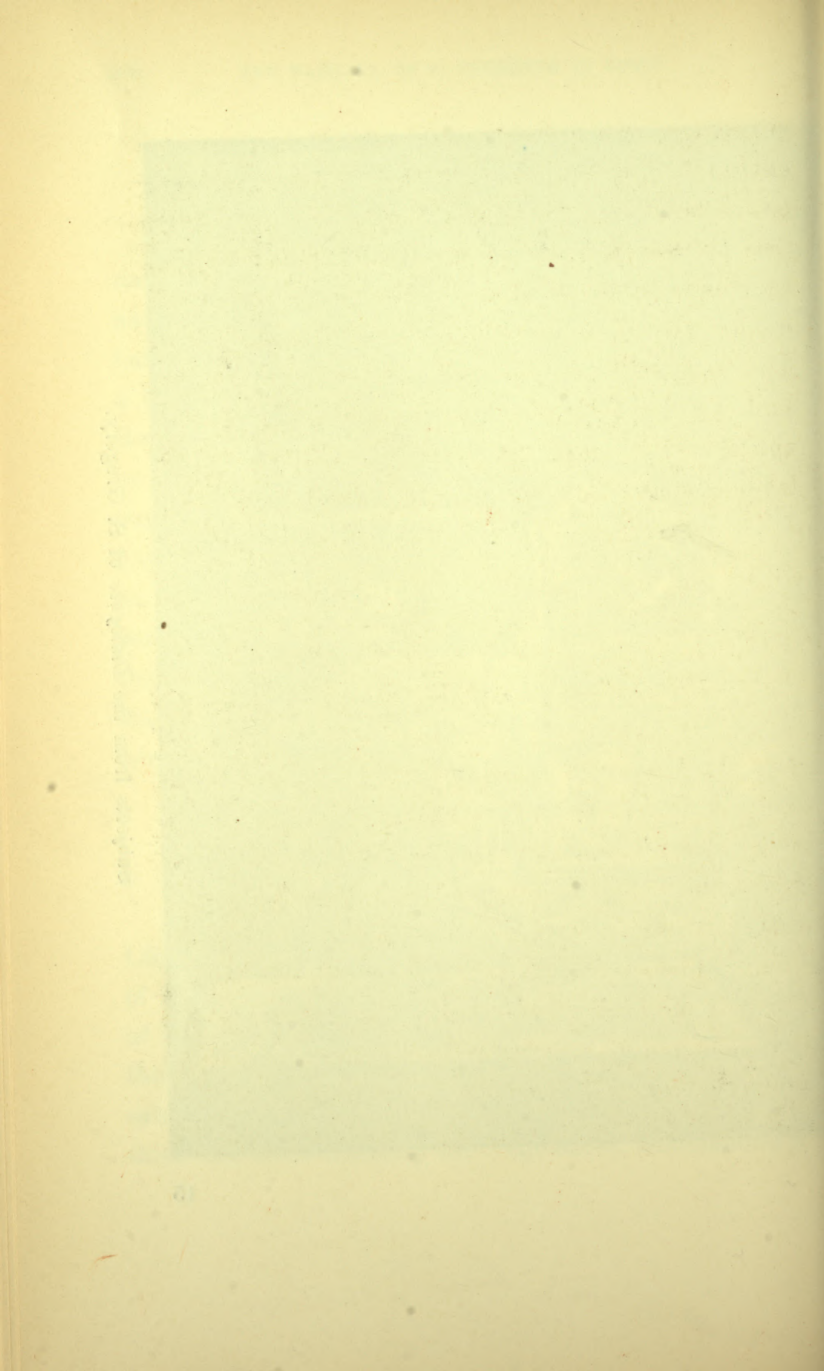
*Where the Abbot seeks forgiveness from Libertinus.*

The next panel to the right represents the same Libertinus raising a dead child to life by the touch of a shoe belonging to Onoratus a former holy abbot of the monastery. In the third compartment we have the story of another holy monk, the gardener of the same monastery of Fondi, who, discovering that a thief had been stealing the vegetables, commanded a





Subjects from the *Dialogues* of S. Gregory.



serpent to guard the gap by which the offender found entrance. The thief on his next visit was so frightened at beholding the monster obstructing his passage that he stumbled and fell amongst the bushes where he was found by the good monk. The monk, however, only mildly reproved him and gave him permission to take what vegetables he needed, even telling him to return and ask for more when in need of them; but never again to take them by stealth. Only fragments of the last subject exist.



## Crucifixion of S. Peter, etc.

The wall at the opposite end of this aisle was also covered with fresco, the purity of the style of which, as far as we can judge from the fragments that remain, makes their ruined condition much to be deplored. The subjects appear to have been arranged in three horizontal lines, which triple division is a remarkable feature of the frescoes in S. Clemente. The figures are placed in the panels singly, in pairs, or in groups. An ornamental border occupies the lower portion of the fresco, and is divided into compartments, in the centre of each of which is a large globe, with four smaller



ones occupying the four corners. Birds resembling the stork are at either side of the large globe and are pecking at something which is being let down from above. We know that the stork is symbolic of the regular life, because it comes and goes at regular intervals, and its position here, feeding on the substance which is descending from the upper panels occupied by saints, is, perhaps, symbolical of the powerful example of the saints in nourishing the regular life.

At the top of the fresco two feet tied to a cross indicate S. Peter's crucifixion. « When thou wert younger », said our Saviour to Peter, « thou used to put on thy own girdle, and walk wherever thou didst wish; but when thou shalt be old, thou must hold out thy hands and some one else shall put on thy girdle and lead thee where thou dost not wish ». Some years later, after S. Peter had gone to his reward, S. John, who narrates the prophecy <sup>1</sup>, adds, just as if the fact were already known to all the world: « He (Jesus) said this to show the kind of death by which S. Peter was to glorify God ». For that death was to be a violent one, one against which nature recoiled, and by crucifixion; he was bound by hands other than his own, and he was called on to stretch out his arms and die as his Master had died, with hands expanded

<sup>1</sup> S. John, XXI, 18-19.



Crucifixion of S. Peter. — Angels. — Saints. — S. Cyril before the Emperor Michael III.





on the cross. But not altogether in the same manner; for, at his own request, a request made lest he should seem too presumptuous in dying the very selfsame death as the Redeemer, and granted only too readily because it was more cruel, Peter was crucified head downwards <sup>1</sup>. Beside this scene to the right is a venerable tonsured head bearing the nimbus. At the extreme left are two beautiful heads of angels. In a circle in the centre of the fresco are the feet and part of the body of a small animal, believed to represent the Mystic Lamb. To the right of this in a separate panel is the lower part of a figure erect and with one hand open and extended. Behind this is part of another figure kneeling or reclining, and above the latter is a beautifully executed head of an angel. To the right again the head and part of the body of another angel, and still further to the right, in a separate panel, is the head and part of the body of a saint. Monsignor Wilpert <sup>2</sup> interprets the reclining figure to re-

<sup>1</sup> The Prince of the Apostles was martyred close to the spot now occupied by his tomb in the great basilica dedicated to him. There are some who, through ignorance or prejudice, attempt to deny that S. Peter was ever in Rome; but, to use the words of the learned Prof. Lanciani (« Pagan and Christian Rome » p. 123), for the archaeologist the presence and execution of SS. Peter and Paul in Rome are facts established beyond a shadow of doubt by purely monumental evidence.

<sup>2</sup> Page 24.

present Jacob sleeping on the ground, and he thinks he sees beside him the ladder and the angel overhead ascending it. The ladder is, he says, the symbol of martyrdom which leads the martyrs directly to Christ; and well therefore has the artist placed Jacob's ladder in this scene in relation with a martyrdom, namely that of S. Peter. Monsignor Wilpert sees on the whole of this wall scenes of the harmony between the Old and New Testaments.

The subject to the left, says Fr. Mullooly <sup>1</sup>, is quite gone. It had been replaced by a panel of very inferior execution. We say « replaced » because it seems scarcely possible that this painting almost grotesque in character could have been originally placed side by side with the other well-executed figures. The subject is a crowned emperor seated on a throne under a canopy; S. Cyril, with the nimbus, kneels before the emperor. His name *Cyrl* is written vertically behind him. The monarch seems by the action of his left hand to be addressing two persons who are standing behind the saint. Most probably the fresco represents S. Cyril's parting audience with Michael III, to whom, in 848, the Chazari of the Danube had sent an embassy asking for priests; the Emperor is here represented directing the Ambassadors to take care of the chosen

<sup>1</sup> Page 239.

missioner. Fr. Mullooly also remarks that the spiral columns and the capitals behind the Emperor are precisely the same as those represented on either side of the picture in which S. Cyril appears in the narthex. Below the Emperor are the letters ALM., but what they signify we cannot say.

Monsignor Wilpert, however, is not satisfied with Fr. Mullooly's interpretation of this picture. He says that it is repugnant to think that a saint should kneel before an emperor who was nicknamed the « Drunkard » (*Ubbriacone*); further that S. Cyril was not called Cyril but Constantine at the time that the mission was entrusted to him; and still further that the person kneeling is not a man but a woman as may be seen from the cape ornamented with pearls and precious stones, a feature which in ancient christian art of the fifth century characterized the costumes of noble ladies and children. And, finally, he cavils at the inscription ACIRIL behind the kneeling figure; of this inscription De Rossi remarks (*Boll.*, 1863, p. 13) that the first three letters, ACI, are clear and almost entire (*chiare e quasi intere*) and that the fourth, R, is half obliterated (*mezzo svanita*). But Monsignor Wilpert suspects that De Rossi erred with regard to the damaged letters on account of his predilection for the name Cyril whose relics he was seeking.

But since, in Monsignor Wilpert's opinion, De Rossi



— the Master of Archaeologists — was not above suspicion, may not Monsignor Wilpert himself be suspected of some little partiality, some little pet theory such as the combination here of scenes relating to the Old and New Testaments, for he regards the kneeling figure as representing Esther pleading for her people before King Assuerus (Esther VIII. 3)? These Old and New Testament scenes must, for Monsignor Wilpert, appear at any cost, even at the price of consistency, and the simple act of kneeling before an emperor which he found repugnant in the case of a missionary priest who was being entrusted by that emperor with a mission to the infidels, does not strike him as unbecoming in a queen and one too who (since the figure in question has the nimbus, the symbol of sanctity) had the reputation for sanctity. Again, since De Rossi spoke only of four letters being damaged, whereas the inscription contains six, of which the last two, that is IL, caused no doubt. Now assuming that De Rossi was prejudiced in the completion of the first four letters, three of which were *clear and almost entire* and therefore not so susceptible of being misinterpreted, how are the last two letters, namely IL, to be disposed of? And where can they be found in the name of Esther? If, again, Cyril was not called Cyril when he undertook the mission to the Chazari, he was known as Cyril when the picture was painted. He was even known as S. Cyril, and a saint is represented



CAPACCINI ROMA

Baptism by immersion.





here, for we see the nimbus. Surely this is sufficient to account for the name Cyril instead of that of Constantine? Fr. Mullooly's interpretation seems to us, therefore, to be the more likely, if not the true one.

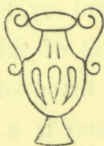
The subject at right angles to this on the left wall represents an Archbishop with what seems to be a Greek pallium; he is baptising, by immersion, a young man. From its position, says Fr. Mullooly<sup>1</sup>, next to the picture representing the beginning of Cyril's first mission it may probably represent the baptism of the Cham of the Chazari, or of Rastices, Duke of Bavaria, or again of Borgois Michael, Duke of Bohemia; for all these were converted by S. Cyril and his brother S. Methodius<sup>2</sup>. The rest of this wall seems to have been frescoed, but no trace of painting now exists.

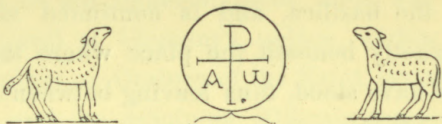
Beside the last fresco is a projecting enclosure of brick which may have been an altar in a lateral chapel, as traces of a large enclosure still exist here. De Rossi supposed it to have been the original monument prepared to receive the marble chest containing S. Cyril's body when removed from the Va-

<sup>1</sup> Page 240.

<sup>2</sup> Monsignor Wilpert, p. 26, thinks it is Pope S. Clement who is here administering Baptism.

tican for interment in S. Clemente. It is situated at « the right side of the Altar », and seems to us the place that would be selected for the interment of the body of S. Cyril.





## THIRD PART

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### THE ANCIENT WALLS

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From the west end of the left aisle a narrow staircase, similar to and serving the same purpose as that which we have noticed in the right aisle, leads to a passage 25 inches wide between walls of different construction and of different periods.

When the excavations had reached the west end of the right aisle it was found that the brick in the lower part of the west wall was of far superior quality to that in the upper part, and the ground having been excavated to a depth of fourteen feet it was still further discovered that the ancient basilica stands on the ruins of much earlier structures, and that the right or north wall of the subterranean church rests upon a titanic structure of great masses of tufa. This gigantic wall makes a right angle just before reaching the north west



corner of the basilica, and is continued across the church, exactly beneath the place where the ancient altar must have stood, thus leaving between itself and the west wall the narrow passage referred to. An immense cornice of travertine binds these masses of tufa together just as in the *Cloaca Maxima*, and the whole construction bears the stamp of the age of the Kings. Some archaeologists hold that we have here part of the wall with which Servius Tullius surrounded Rome, while others assert that these remains must have formed part of some important building, perhaps the palace of Tarquin the Proud, or the Government Mint in the early days of the Republic. The large chambers under the subterranean church, constructed of great blocks of tufa, certainly indicate the existence of some important building; but what precise purpose that building served must remain a mystery until the excavations, now so happily resumed, be prosecuted further.

The walls have been traced 98 feet from north to south and over 400 feet from east to west without finding a termination either way; and, according to Fr. Mullooly, they are still buried in the ground at a depth of about twenty feet. We may infer from this how low must have been the level of Rome in the age of the Kings.

The lower portions of the west wall, which corresponds with the cord of the apse, are of the finest

brickwork of the Imperial times. This was probably the outer wall of Clement's palace, within which is the *Dominicum* or Oratory of the Saint, situated under the apse, and the adjoining Mithraic temple.



## HOUSE OF S. CLEMENT

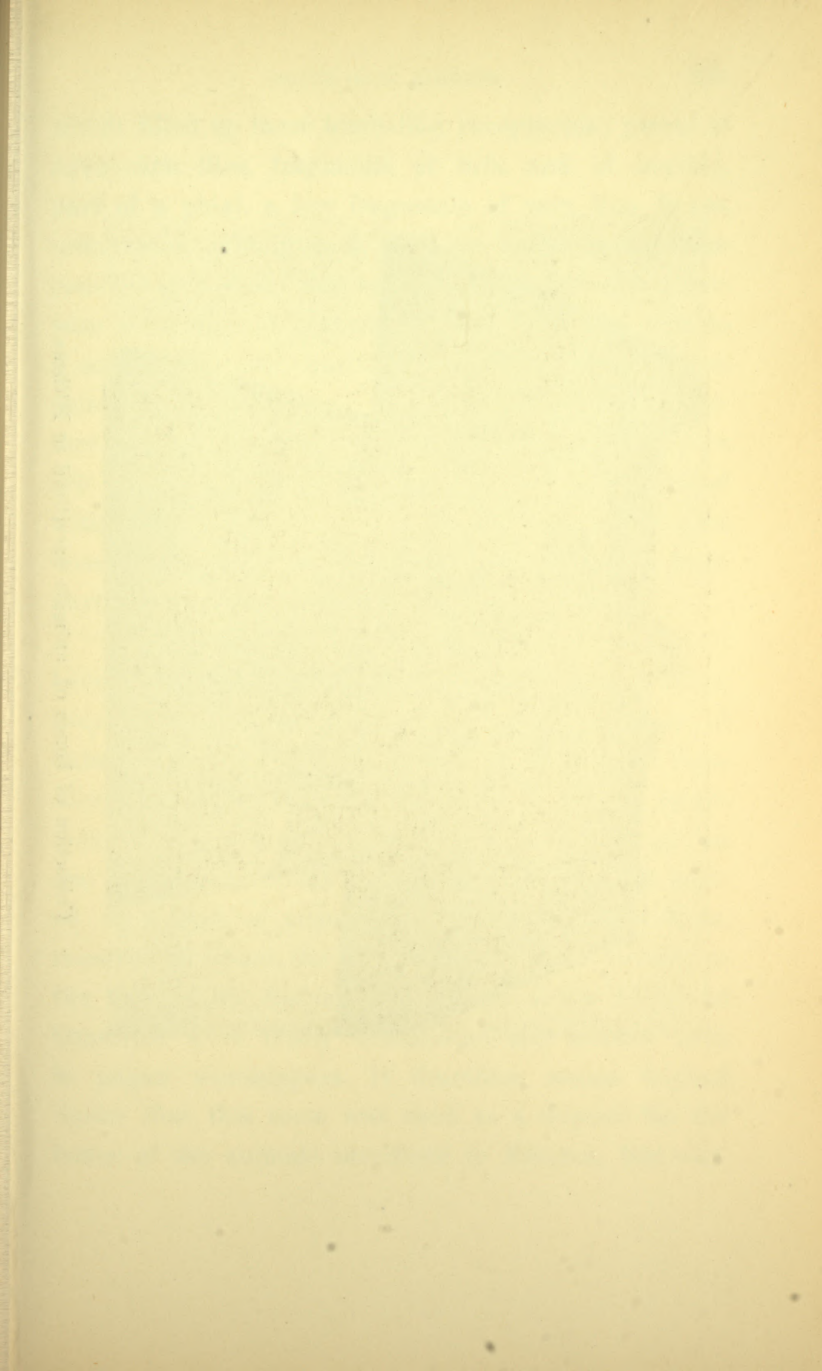
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A doorway<sup>1</sup> in the west wall of the left aisle leads to a spacious stairway of more than twenty steps descending to the apartments of a fine Roman dwelling-house. Fr. Mullooly, after the excavations made here by him in 1869, believed that there were only twenty steps in this ancient stairway, and therefore regarded the floor at the bottom of the twentieth step as the level of the original floor of S. Clement's house. But, during the course of our excavations begun within the same house less than a month ago, the present writer, after a minute study of the known part of this house and its surroundings and after having removed the temporary floor constructed by Fr. Mullooly's immediate successor in the Priorship of S. Clemente,

<sup>1</sup> This doorway seems to have been closed up before the eleventh century, probably in the ninth century.

felt, that the original floor must be sought for at a still lower level. Beginning, therefore, at the base of the twentieth step to delve deeper, we found a twenty-first step, and a twenty-second, and a promise of a twenty-third. At this point water began to peep at us from beneath, and so there remained but to clear away, to the depth of about two and a half feet, the floor which was regarded by Fr. Mullooly as first century, but which we believe to belong to the fourth. After removing the layer of old Roman cement, which was as hard as flint and which covered the floor to a depth of about six inches, we came upon some square and some oblong enclosures surrounded by light walls constructed of brick, of pieces of tufa, and fragments of marble, and covered with a layer of plaster. These enclosures, especially the oblong ones, seemed very like tombs; and at once the question suggested itself: Were they Christian tombs? The thought of a Christian tomb in a first century Roman house not only awoke a more lively interest, but inspired awe and reverence in the treatment of every cubic inch of filling-up material which was now to be removed. It was not yet a month since all this part had been under water, and now the earthy material remained a mass of soft mud. Carefully, and bit by bit were the contents of these enclosures removed. There seemed to have been no order or arrangement in the materials







Collection of bones of animals sacrificed to Mithras.

which filled up these tomb-like receptacles; pieces of *terra-cotta* tiles, fragments of tufa and of marble, part of a phial, a few fragments of very fine *terra-cotta* vases, a lamp such as those found in the Catacombs but without any symbol — Christian or otherwise —, lumps of carbonised wood reduced now to a soft black pulp, and a quantity of animal bones, principally head-bones, were found mixed up together in one of these enclosures. Some of the bones are large jaw-bones most of which are furnished with well-preserved teeth, and two very large wild boar tusks with a number of smaller ones also form part of the collection.

It now became apparent that whatever may have been the original use of these tomb-like enclosures, they were last used as receptacles for the bones of animals — of the animals, no doubt, which had been sacrificed to the pagan deity Mithras, for the apartment in which these bones were found adjoins, on one side, an ambulatory which seems to have served as a kind of atrium to the temple of Mithras, constructed about the third century and probably in the time of the fierce persecutions when Christian Oratories were freely confiscated and handed over to pagan worshippers. It therefore seems beyond doubt that this room was used as a deposit for the bones of the animals sacrificed to Mithras. But whe-



ther the apparent tombs were once the tombs of Christians and afterwards defiled by the worshippers of Mithras cannot be determined until, at least, the excavations will have been pushed further. One thing we know, however, and this on the evidence of the greatest living authority<sup>1</sup> on the subject, is that our collection of bones of animals sacrificed to Mithras is the largest and most interesting ever discovered.

Thus, in these tombs, we have found a part of the skeleton of Mithraism — a powerful pagan cult that died of inanition sixteen centuries ago<sup>2</sup>.

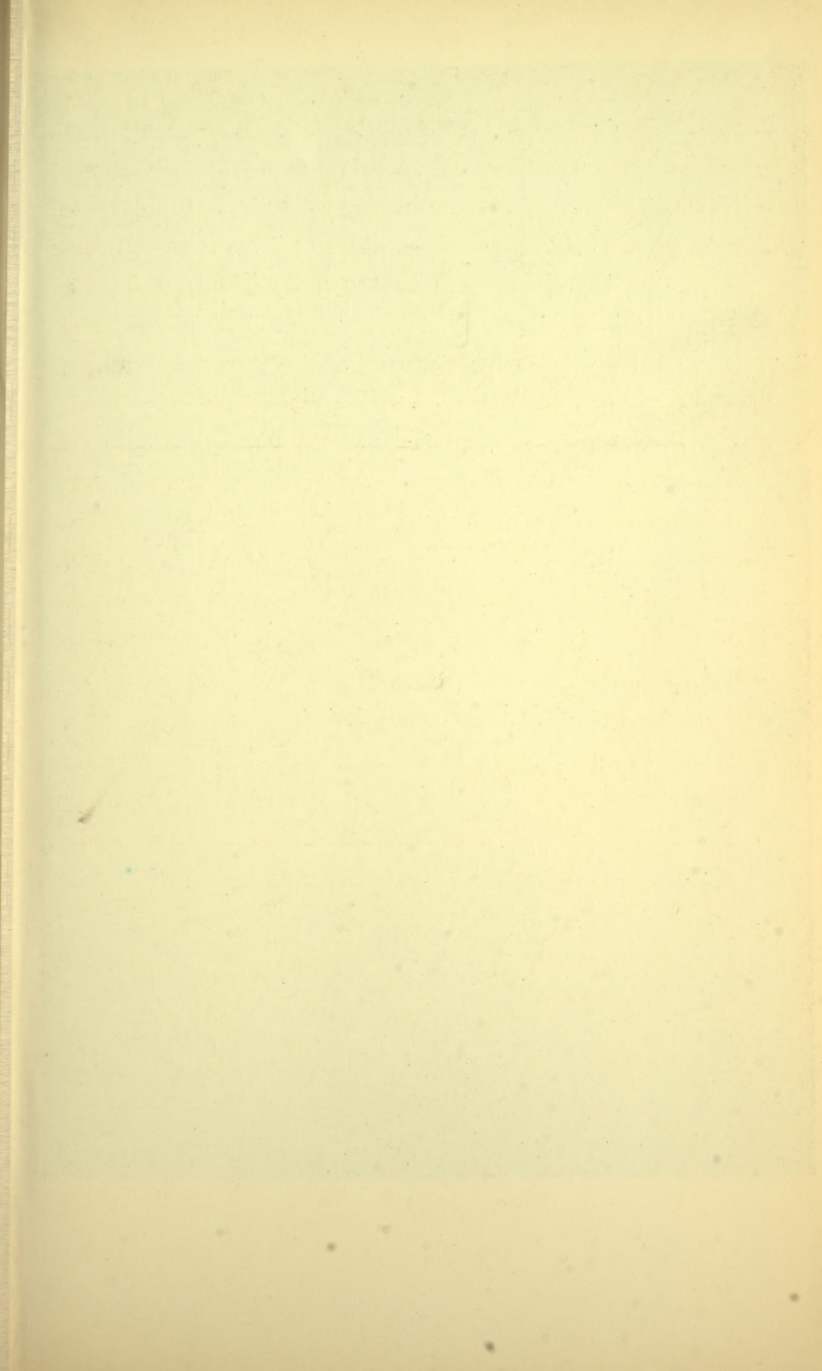
We give here a reproduction of a photograph which we have made of all such bones so far unearthed at S. Clemente, reserving for another work a fuller notice of the discovery.

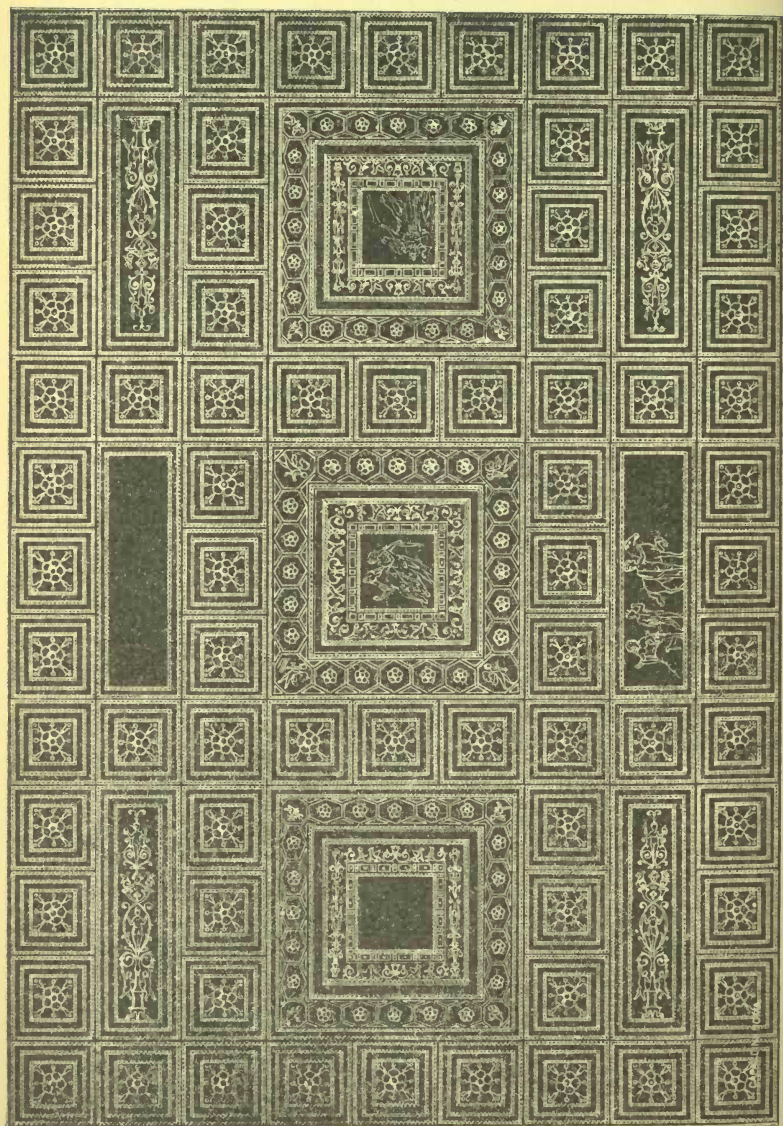
Leaving this room at the foot of the stairs — a room which heretofore had no other interest than that it was one of a large number in the house of S. Clement — we pass into the adjoining chamber of much larger dimensions, and known as the « *Dominicum Clementis* ».

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Franz Cumont.

<sup>2</sup> It is a fact well worthy of notice that while Christianity, even in its infancy, thrived on State opposition and persecution, the sturdy, full-grown, powerful Mithraism died on the withdrawal of State support.









## THE « DOMINICUM CLEMENTIS »

The « *Dominicum Clementis* » with its vaulting of stucco decorations is situated under the apse of the subterranean basilica and occupies with regard to it the same position which, in the Vatican basilica, is occupied by the Confession of S. Peter, and in so many other ancient churches by the shrines of the saints to whose memory they were erected. Reading therefore S. Jerome's notice of S. Clement, which was written at the end of the fourth century and which concludes with the words : « *Nominis ejus memoriam usque hodie Roma exstructa ecclesia custodit* » <sup>1</sup>, it is hard to resist the conviction that the *Memoria* here mentioned is none other than this chamber. The question then arises : How can it be a *Memoria* of a martyred Pope whose relics remained in the Crimea until the ninth century ? Before giving a direct answer to this question it may be opportune to refer to an inscription on a bronze plate attached to one of the collars worn by slaves. One side of this plate <sup>2</sup> bears the words :

TENE ME QUIA FUG. ET REBOCA ME 3  
VICTORI ACOLITO A DOMINICU CLEMENTIS ✠

<sup>1</sup> *De Viris Illustr.*, c. XV.

<sup>2</sup> This was in the museum of Lelio Pasquolini (see Fr. Mullooly, p. 179).

<sup>3</sup> Fabretti, *Inscript.*, p. 522 n. 365.

*Hold me fast for I am a runaway; and return me to Victor the acolyte of the Dominicum of Clement.*

These badges of slavery are sought for in vain in the inscriptions of the catacombs; but in this case there is nothing inconsistent with the elevating influence of Christianity, for these bronze plates were substituted, in accordance with an early law of Constantine, for the degrading practice of branding slaves on the forehead. The point however to which we wish to draw attention is that Victor, the owner of the slave, does not style himself *Acolytus Basilicae* or *Tituli S. Clementis* (though S. Clemente was probably a *Titulus* at the time), but *Acolytus a Dominicu Clementis*. Of all the inscriptions found in Rome touching priests, deacons, and other ministers of the sanctuary, this is the only one which calls a church by the name *Dominicum*<sup>1</sup>. This appellation, as S. Cyprian testifies<sup>2</sup>, was used in the days of persecution to denote the place where the Christians assembled for divine worship; but, after the middle of the fourth century, never appears on Roman inscriptions. Thus we are again confronted with a church of S. Clement in the time of Constantine, and known by the appellation given to Christian places of worship in the ages of persecution. Now this is not to be wondered at, for the Roman

<sup>1</sup> See note Part I, page 21.

<sup>2</sup> *De Op. et Elem.* n. 19. *In Dominicum sine sacrificio venis.*

Church, even in its official capacity, possessed certain *loca religiosa* or places of worship before the publication of the famous Edict of Milan in 312, by Constantine and Licinius. Such *loca religiosa* were found generally within the palaces of distinguished converts to the Faith of Christ, who allowed part of the interior of their great houses to be adapted to the requirements of the liturgy, and for the assemblies of the faithful<sup>1</sup>. These places of worship as had been in private houses retained, after the peace of the church, the names of the families in whose house they had been, such as S. Pudentiana, S. Cecilia, etc., and it was not the custom in the fourth century to call a church or an oratory after the name of a saint unless it was built in that saint's own house or over his sepulchre. S. Clement's sepulchre being in the Crimea, we are thus led to the conclusion that the *Dominicum Clementis* formed or contained part of the house once occupied by S. Clement himself. Consequently the *Memoria* of S. Clement, with its stucco ornaments of the first or second century, so carefully preserved beneath the apse of the basilica, is no other than an apartment of the house inhabited by him « whose name is in the book of life », (Philipp. IV, 3)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius (« Hist. Eccles. », Bk. VIII. c. 17.) tells us that Galerius gave orders in 311 for the restoration to the Christians of those houses where they had been accustomed to assemble.

<sup>2</sup> See De Rossi, « Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana » Seconda Serie, I, pp. 153-168.



We know, too, that Pope S. Evaristus (112-121. A. D.) erected Titles in Rome, and S. Clemente is mentioned in the earliest known authentic list of Titles. Such Titles were erected in those places where the faithful, from the earliest days of Christianity, had been accustomed to assemble for the celebration of the divine mysteries.

This Oratory and the adjoining chambers were accessible for a few years after their discovery; but in 1872 the water began to rise there, and in 1882 the then Prior, Fr. Mullooly's successor, raised the flooring of the Oratory and that of the entrance to it with the hope of keeping it still accessible and of permitting the Mithraim to be seen from it; but the labour proved fruitless for the water continued to rise until the new floor lay four feet and that of the Mithraim about eight feet below the surface of the water.

The Oratory is separated from an *ambulacrum* or passage — 28 feet long and 6 feet 10 in. wide — by two piers from which three arches spring. These arches at the time of the discovery were filled up with brickwork. Embedded in the piers are two square pilasters of Parian marble with debased Corinthian capitals which contrast strongly with the classical style of the stucco vault and seem to be the work of a later period, perhaps of the third century.

In the passage, near the pilasters, is a fragment of

a large column of Numidian marble sunk into the pavement. The precise use of this column is not known ; but it seems to us, from its position, to have been used in connection with the celebration of the Mithraic mysteries. Beside it was found the *Ara* or altar which is now in the Mithraic temple. The appearance of this pagan altar in so close proximity to a christian temple caused no little surprise when first discovered ; but the surprise vanished when, on breaking through a bricked up doorway in the wall opposite, and removing the earth which filled the chamber to which it led, it was found that a pagan temple stood at the other side of the passage.



### THE TEMPLE OF MITHRAS

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This chamber seems to have been deliberately transformed into a cave for the celebration of the Mithraic mysteries. It is thirty feet long and twenty feet wide, and has a vaulted roof which is pierced by eleven *luminaria* or skylights. Some of them are round, some square, and all were decorated with mosaics, while mosaic bands also run round the walls at the sides and ends ; the rest of the vaulting is decorated with small stones imitating the roof of a grotto<sup>1</sup>. The significance of these socalled *luminaria* is not clear ;

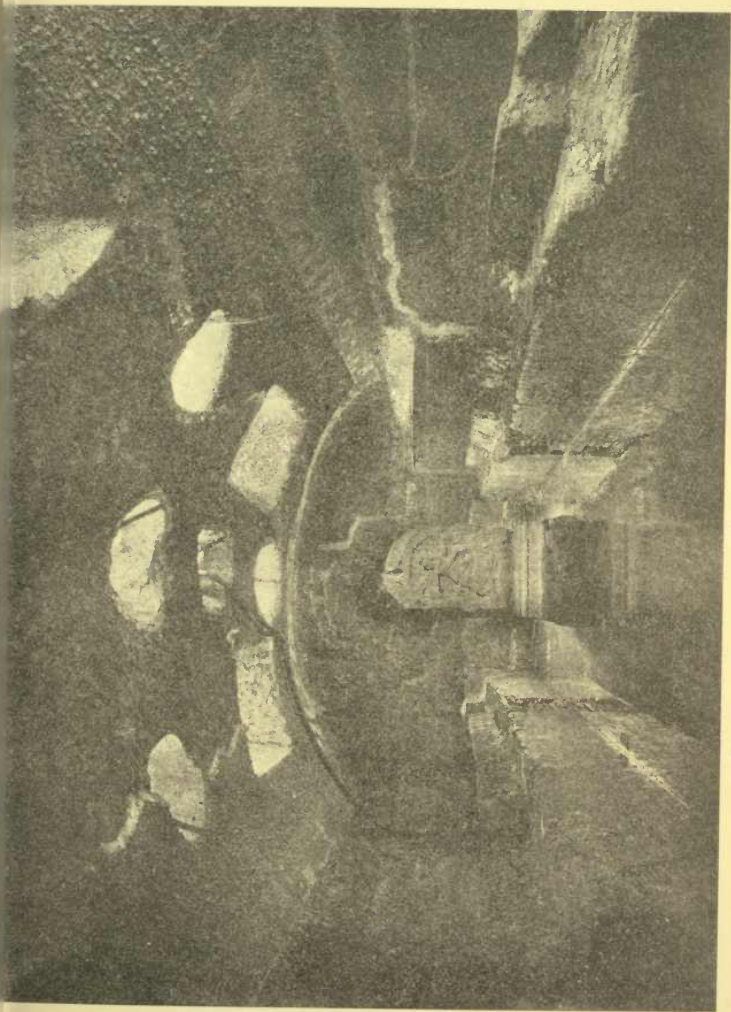
<sup>1</sup> Mr. Franz Cumont, the greatest living authority on Mithraism, has just visited S. Clemente, and for the first time has seen

the number *eleven* is no doubt symbolical, but of what, we cannot say. At the extreme end of the cave, where another door-way seems to have been filled up, is a niche high up in the wall, where, no doubt the statue of Mithras stood in pride of place. Below the niche is a small square cavity built of brick. It may have contained water for religious purification, or perhaps it served as a receptacle for the blood of victims. Near it, on the floor, there still remains a portion of an altar in front of which is a small round piece of marble sunk into the pavement and upon which burned, it is supposed, the sacred fire that was kindled in the small square furnaces facing each other in the side of the benches.

In the centre of the floor is now the altar which was found in the passage outside the temple; but we doubt if it is in its proper position, as we rather think that it should be near the place of sacrifice which was probably at the entrance to the cave. The upper part of the altar has disappeared <sup>1</sup>, but as it stands it is four feet high, two feet five inches across the front and back, and twenty inches along the sides. On the front of it is the background of a grotto, in the centre of which is represented the *Taurobolium* or sacrifice of our temple of Mithras, which he pronounces the most perfect as yet discovered.

<sup>1</sup> We have just discovered, in what seems to be a fourth century floor in the Oratory of S. Clement, some of the missing parts of this altar.





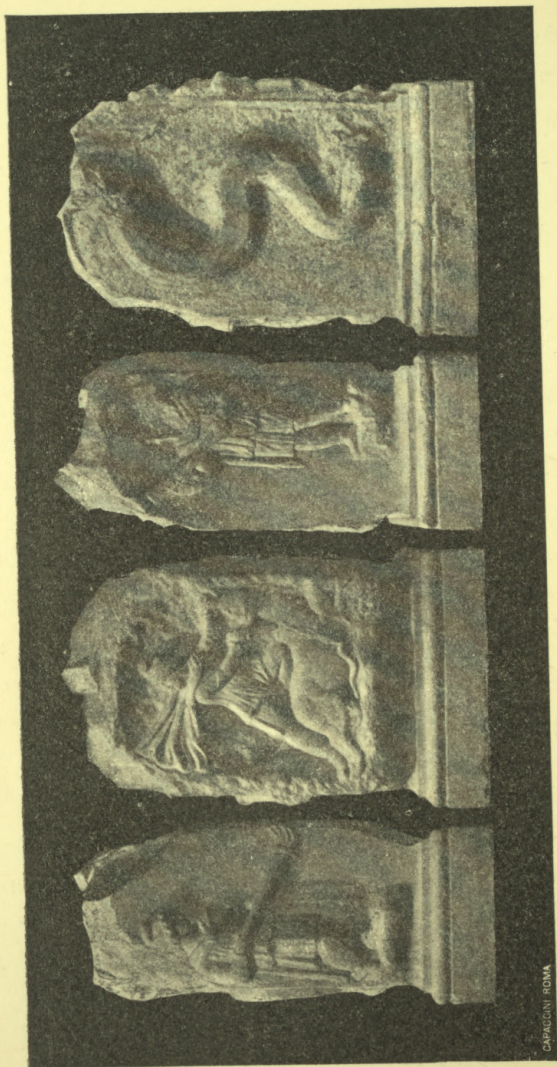
(Fot. Anderson).

The Temple of Mithras (now dry) when still under water in March 1914.









CAPASSINI ROMA

Pagan Altar.

the bull. Mithras is clad in a short tunic with his chlamys or cloak floating over his left shoulder, and wearing a Phrygian cap. He has his left knee on the bull stretched on the ground before him, and he is holding him by the nostrils with the left hand while he plunges a dagger into him with the right. A dog and a serpent lick the blood that flows trickling from the wound. Two genii clothed like Mithras stand at either side as his assistants, one with an erect torch to indicate the rising sun, Mithras being regarded as a solar deity; the other with a lowered torch to indicate the setting sun. On the edges on the upper part of the represented grotto are fragmentary figures of the sun and moon. On the back of the altar a serpent is represented.

Along the side walls are raised platforms ascended by three steps from the ends near the entrance. The platforms which are six feet wide and three feet three inches from the ground are not level like those found in other Mithraisms, but form an inclined plain towards the wall.<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to say what purpose they served. De Rossi suggests that they were *Triclinia* on which the guests reclined while participating in some sacred feast. This is by no means improbable, for in the Mithraic mys-

<sup>1</sup> The benches of the Mithraim recently discovered at the Baths of Caracalla also form an inclined plain.

teries there was a profane imitation of the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist <sup>1</sup>. Along the outer extremity of these benches is a depressed edge on which are six semicircular niches, three on the right and three on the left. They were formerly covered with marble, fragments of which still remain. In the Mithraim at Ostia there is a similar edge on which were placed, it is supposed, lamps, fire vases, and small altars of *terra-cotta*.

In the corner at the right of the present entrance was found the marble bust of apollo, the sun-god. In the same corner, and running up through the vaulting, is a large *terracotta* tube.

A *cippus*, containing the inscription CAUTE SACR., was found in the temple. *Cautus* was one of the appellations of Mithras, and similar symbols have been found in other Mithraic temples.

There can be no doubt as to this having been a Mithraic Spelaeum, but the question presents itself: How did this Oriental superstition find a home in such close proximity to a church of the age of Constantine, and actually communicating with the most sacred spot in that church, the *Memoria* of S. Clement? The Mi-

<sup>1</sup> An excellent work on the Mithraic Worship is that by M. Franz Cumont: *Textes et monuments figurés relatifs au culte de Mithra*, 2 vols. in 4<sup>o</sup>, Bruxelles, 1896-1899.



thraic worship held its ground in Rome and especially in private houses until 394. And had this been a private house belonging to persons of that sect, they would certainly have never been disturbed in their idolatrous practices, nor have forfeited the possession of their house until the end of the fourth century. The only satisfactory solution of the question is the supposition of De Rossi that this Spelaeum or rather the stuccoed chamber connected with it, was one of the *Loca Religiosa* restored to the Christians by Constantine, as having been originally their property and used by them for Christian worship.

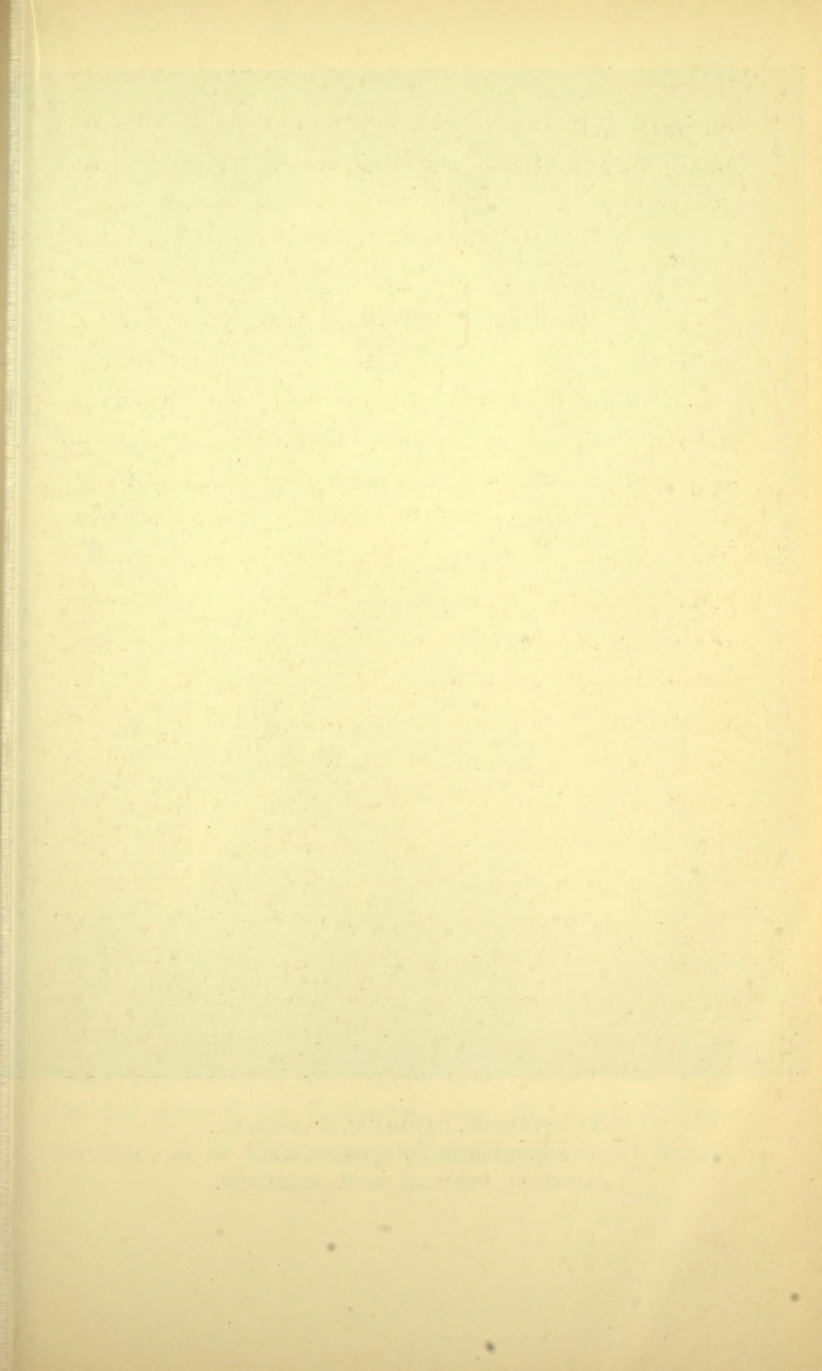
Supposing, therefore, that this stuccoed chamber was used by S. Clement as a place of assembly for the « Church in his house », and after his exile and martyrdom regarded with still greater veneration by Roman Christians as his *Memoria*, it would be just one of those places likely to be marked out for confiscation, and it was actually, in the second or third century, defiled by the Mithraic Spelaeum, to which it or at least a part of it was made to serve as vestibule<sup>1</sup>. The Christians would still remember the spot as the *Dominicum Clementis*, and it would be one of the first sacred places that S. Melchiades would claim as of right

<sup>1</sup> The excavations at present being carried on at S. Clemente are proving abundantly the correctness of this supposition.

belonging to the Christians, when Maxentius decreed the restoration of the *Loca Ecclesiastica* (S. Aug., *Brev. Coll. cum Donat.*, III, 34).



In the first edition of this work (published in 1910) we had to lament that the sacred Oratory of the martyred Pontiff S. Clement, a spot once hallowed by the footprints of S. Peter, S. Paul, S. Barnabas, and many other illustrious martyrs and heroes of the primitive Church, and which saw the struggle between paganism and Christianity, and which witnessed the victory of the Cross of Christ over the polytheism of the Roman empire proclaimed by the grand fourth century basilica overhead, we had to lament, I say, that this Oratory was then as it had been for the twenty-five preceding years, closed alike to the pious pilgrim and the studious archaeologist, owing to the vast quantity of water by which it was inundated. Today, however, our tone is changed - changed from lamentation to exultation - thanks to the princely munificence of the present great Cardinal Titular of S. Clemente, whose love for art and archaeology, and his appreciation of the historic value of S. Clemente are equalled only by his generosity.







HIS EMINENCE, CARDINAL O'CONNELL,  
ARCHBISHOP OF BOSTON, AND  
CARDINAL TITULAR OF S. CLEMENTE.

In November 1911, eighteen new Cardinals were created by Pope Pius X, one of whom was Archbishop O'Connell of Boston. S. Clemente was then, fortunately, without a Cardinal Titular, and to Cardinal O'Connell it was assigned as his Title. On the 8<sup>th</sup> December of the same year, his Eminence took possession of his Titular Church. In his address he told the vast concourse of people, assembled on the occasion, of his great delight on having received, and of his gratitude to the Holy Father for having assigned him, S. Clemente as his Title; but he said not a word of what he intended to do for S. Clemente. His Eminence, however, had very noble intentions on that point, and, before leaving Rome, made himself thoroughly acquainted of the condition of his Titular Church, and of the means by which it could be rescued from the destruction with which it was threatened by the vast quantity of water lying in its lowest structures. In February 1912, the Cardinal returned to Boston, and on Easter-day a letter came to the writer of these pages bringing from his Eminence the joyful tidings that the work of draining S. Clemente was to be begun at once, and that he would bear the expenses. The work involved the cutting of a tunnel from a point in a large cloaca at the far side of the Coliseum, near the Arch of Constantine, to S. Clemente, a distance of about seven

hundred yards, and at a depth varying from thirty to forty-five feet below the surface of the road. The tunnel was begun on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 1912, and, after overcoming difficulties which at times seemed almost insurmountable, it is now completed; the water which inundated S. Clemente has gone off into the Tiber and passed into history, and the splendid tunnel or « Emissarium Clementinum » stands a great monument to a great Cardinal, who, since the days of Mercurius in the sixth, and Anastatius at the beginning of the twelfth century, must be ranked as the most beneficent of the many great Cardinals of S. Clemente.

As a separate work is now being published on the draining of S. Clemente, I shall here say no more on the subject than to express the hope that the excavations which the removal of the water has now rendered possible may be able to be successfully continued so that the archaeological treasures which still lie buried in the depths of S. Clemente may soon be brought to light.







## APPENDIX

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### I.

## The great Slav Pilgrimage <sup>1</sup>.

(July 1881).

In September 1880 Pope Leo XIII issued an encyclical in which he spoke of the great labours of SS. Cyril and Methodius and of the great veneration in which they were held by the Slav peoples ; and he decreed that their feast should henceforth be celebrated throughout the whole church on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July. The Pontiff also determined to have the feast on the following July celebrated with great magnificence ; and this for two reasons, first to give honour to the two great apostles, secondly to bring the different Slavonic peoples together so that they might be strengthened in the true

<sup>1</sup> For the story of this pilgrimage we are indebted to a manuscript account written by an eyewitness.

Faith and in their obedience to the See of Peter, for these peoples had been and were being subjected to many dangers in these respects by Russian, Prussian, and Turkish persecution. A great pilgrimage to the Eternal City was then arranged for in Russia, Austria, Poland, Bohemia, Croatia, Moravia, Dalmatia, Carinthia, Bosnia, Herzegovinia, and Bulgaria. The rich of course



E. C. Devlin.

Atrium of S. Clemente  
during the Slav Pilgrimage (1881).

came at their own expense, but the poor who were desirous of joining the pilgrimage were assisted by diocesan collections made for that purpose. Towards the end of June 1881 the pilgrims started on their journey, and on the last day of the month, more than one thousand three hundred pilgrims, of whom between three and four hundred were priests, had arrived in Rome.

They were of all conditions of life, from the Polish prince and noble to the Croatian peasant and Bosnian mountaineer.

S. Clemente was naturally selected as the scene of the celebrations, and due preparations had been made there for the occasion. A huge awning was stretched



M. A. E. Devlin.

Interior of the Church  
during the Slav Pilgrimage (1881).

over the cloister, and in the centre was placed the statue representing SS. Cyril and Methodius. Three altars were erected at each side of the entrance to the church, while the walls of the cloister were hung with rich tapestries brought from the Vatican. On the front of the church and under the awning were placed inscriptions in the five principal Slavonic languages, and



festoons of flowers were gracefully suspended between the pillars. The interior of the church was decorated on an elaborate scale. A dozen large wax candles, costing twenty-five francs each, were placed at regular intervals on the marble walls of the choir, while four hundred smaller ones were arranged without interruption all round the cornice of the church. A triple band of cloth of gold was wound round the pillars while red silk curtains, trimmed with gold, were suspended from the arches. The side walls were completely covered with red stuffs, and the clerestory walls were decorated with blue and gold up to the very ceiling. A large painting of SS. Cyril and Methodius was placed in the arch of the tribune. Three parts of the church and the whole of the cloister were reserved exclusively for the pilgrims.

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> of July were the four days fixed for the celebrations. On each of these days the Mass of SS. Cyril and Methodius was celebrated by all, and from early morning till towards noon all the altars were occupied. The Pontifical High Mass on Sunday was celebrated at eight o'clock, in the Slavonic-Ruthenian rite, by the Archbishop of Leopoli, and a sermon in Ruthenian was preached by his Coadjutor. The Mass and sermon lasted four hours, that is, from eight to twelve o'clock. In the Greek rite there is but

one Mass in every church, one priest celebrates and the others assist. All the assistant priests go to Communion; before communicating they wash their hands and then advance towards the altar in single file singing all the time a simple but beautiful *Alleluia*. Each priest who assists takes the chalice into his hands and so receives the Precious Blood, but the students receive it from a golden spoon.

During this mass the church presented a most picturesque appearance for it was filled with Slav pilgrims dressed in their different national costumes. The Bosnians and Herzegovinians were all tall, thin, wiry men, and of a swarthy complexion. Their heads were shaven in front, but they wore their hair very long behind and it fell gracefully over their shoulders. They wore red turbans, short, parti-coloured jackets without sleeves, very large sashes, coloured trousers, and fancifully ornamented shoes or buskins. They seemed to affect gold chains and earrings. The piety of these men was most remarkable. They devoutly recited the Rosary nearly all the time. The Bulgarians were dressed in a somewhat similar though perhaps simpler manner. They wore a red fez with a blue tassel, a short blue jacket, and wide blue trousers. Their heads were not shaven but they wore their hair close cut, and also wore moustaches. The Dalmatians were tall like the Bosnians, but stouter. Those in better circumstances

wore blue jackets and blue trousers, they also had little scarlet caps, and displayed a couple of rows of little gilt balls down the front of their jacket. The poorer people were content with silver gilt balls. The Moravians were distinguished from all the others by thin white linen sleeves, and even some wore trousers of the same material. The lower classes among the Poles, Croats, Ruthenians, and Bohemians wore long coats coming down to their knees, and very high boots. The jackets worn by the Croats were usually coloured. Most of them wore their hair long and loosely hanging over their foreheads. A Polish prince and several Polish noblemen accompanied the pilgrimage, and one of these noblemen was dressed in the national costume. He wore a blue coat of so gauzy a texture as to permit the inner garments to be seen through it; these latter were of white silk covered with embroidery. His attire was completed by a yellow fur cap, a beautiful sash, high red boots, and a long sword in a jewelled scabbard. Hardly any of the women on the pilgrimage were remarkable for peculiarity of dress.

At six o'clock a very long sermon was preached in Polish, which was followed by vespers in the Latin rite, sung by the Pope's own choir, the Sistine. The singing was of course very beautiful, but vespers



were so long that the pilgrims did not leave the church till nine oclock <sup>1</sup>.

On Monday there were about eighty masses celebrated by the pilgrim priests. The Pontifical High Mass, according to the Slavonic-Bulgarian rite, was sung by Monsignor Nilo Isvour who had previously been a schismatical Bishop of the Greek Church, but who, nine years before his appearance at S. Clemente, had become a Catholic and brought his whole diocese into the true fold with him. A sermon was preached in Slavonic during the mass. At six oclock another sermon was preached in Bohemian, and was followed by vespers in the Latin rite sung by the Sistine Choir.

Tuesday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of July, being the feast of SS. Cyril and Methodius, the pilgrims were more than ordinarily enthusiastic and devout. Before midday one hundred and thirty masses had been celebrated at S. Clemente. At eight oclock the Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by Monsignor Strossmayr, Bishop of Bosnia, who also preached the sermon in Croatian. At midday an audience was given by the Holy Father to all the pilgrims. When the Pope appeared, borne on the *Sedia Gestatoria*, his face was beaming with smiles, and as

<sup>1</sup> Those who lived in or visited Rome before the *Motu proprio* of Pope Pius X. on Sacred Music appeared will readily believe the length of the Solemn Vespers in those days in the Eternal City.

he passed along he blessed the kneeling multitude again and again. When he had arrived at the throne, Monsignor Strossmayr read an address to which the Holy Father replied in his own paternal and spirited manner. Then all the pilgrims approached two by two and kissed the Pope's foot, after which they presented His Holiness with half a million francs. At half past five there was a sermon in Italian followed by vespers, *Te Deum*, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. When the whole function was over and most of the people had left the church, a number of Polish pilgrims who were kneeling in the centre of the nave began to sing very beautifully, then a Polish priest addressed them for some time, after which he brought them into the choir where they resumed the singing. He then gave them the relic of S. Cyril to kiss. After this they departed.

On Wednesday, the Pontifical High Mass was sung in the Roman rite. After mass all went to the Vatican where the pilgrims gave musical selections, and recitations in the various Slav languages before the Pope. Next day they all returned to their homes <sup>1</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> It was during this pilgrimage that arrangements were made for the erection in S. Clemente of the Chapel to SS. Cyril and Methodius.

## II.

The Sceptic's Dream <sup>1</sup>.

It was the Festival of S. Clement. I was at Rome, and wandering with a friend among the stately ruins of the Coliseum. The gentle autumnal breeze brought to our ears the sound of distant church bells. « It is « time to go to S. Clement's » said my friend, « are « you not coming with me ? ». « No, thank you », I replied, « the church itself is interesting, I grant you, « from its ancient architecture and frescoes, but as a « work of art alone, at least to me. The legendary « meanings of the paintings on its walls, are to me as « mythical as the history of Romulus and Remus. No, « I leave such puerilities to women and children. » « I will not attempt to argue with you », was the answer, « but », opening his English Prayer-book, « having « seen you at the English Service last Sunday, I fancied you might venerate a church in which the remains repose of a Saint commemorated by our Communion », and he pointed to the line in the Kalendar, marked Nov. 23, S. Clement Bp. and Martyr. « My dear fellow », I answered, « all Communions are

<sup>1</sup> By M. H.



« much the same to me. I went to church last Sunday  
« because the rest of my party did so ; but you must  
« not take for granted in consequence that such is my  
« habit. Christianity may have effected much, I do  
« not say it has not, but civilization has done more,  
« and we of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the age of free thought  
« cannot again put ourselves in leading-strings. Look  
« at these piers, was this gigantic pile erected by Christ-  
« ians ? After all, we are a set of pigmies compared  
« to those whom you would term our less enlightened  
« progenitors. The very stones of Rome have a voice ».  
« Yes », he answered, « but like the writing on Bal-  
« thassar's wall, there is only one true interpretation ».  
So saying, he left me, and sitting down on a stone,  
half worn away by the knees of pilgrims, I lazily  
watched the daws and listened to their cawing, as  
they flew in and out of the upper arches until over-  
come with drowsiness, I fell asleep, and dreamt, and  
this was my dream :

I dreamt that I was alone, pacing up and down  
one of the aisles in the church of Clement, when sud-  
denly, I *felt*, without at first seeing anything, that  
some one was near me. I turned my head, and saw  
that, close beside me, stood a shadowy figure, whose  
features I could not distinctly discern, the whole form  
being enveloped in a kind of mist ; but a voice, differ-  
ent from any I had ever known, fell on my ear :

« Even the stones of Rome speak », it said, « come  
« with me, and I will tell you what they say ». An  
unseen power seemed to constrain me to follow my  
conductor, and I hastened after the shadowy form,  
down the flight of steps which led to the subterranean  
church. « You reject as false all you cannot see with  
« your bodily eyes », it said, is it not so? All un-  
« written tradition is the same to you — a collection  
« of idle tales; and much even that you see, you de-  
« clare to be interpolated, if it does not exactly agree  
« with your own ideas of what is reasonable. Am I  
« not right? » I bowed my head in assent. « You con-  
« sider Romulus and Remus as mythical personages;  
« you doubt whether such a patriot as Horatius Cocles  
« ever existed, except in the poet's brain; but you be-  
« lieve, do you not, that there were such monarchs as  
« Nero and Trajan? » I bowed again. Why do you be-  
« lieve in them? Perhaps they — perhaps none of the  
« so-called Caesars ever really lived ». I murmured some-  
thing about the testimony which not one, but se-  
veral histories gave to their existence, recording their  
deeds, entering into minute descriptions of their very  
characters — also, that even the buildings in Rome  
added further confirmation. « Yet you have allowed  
« the doubt to enter into your mind, whether Christ-  
« ianity itself is of divine origin, and you actually  
« sneer at those who venerate, with reverential affec-

« tion, the martyrs who won their crown by embracing death in its most terrible shapes, rather than apostatize ». « I never sneered at a martyr himself in whatever cause », I hastily answered, « truth, self-devotion, self-denial, must always command respect ». « Look on this, then », the figure replied, « but first cast from your mind scepticism and frivolity, which as poisonous exhalations interpose between you and the truth. Here you see the installation of S. Clement, the *fellow labourer* of S. Paul, as Bishop of Rome; here again, he is celebrating the Holy Eucharist: see the altar, paten, chalice, the very words in the open book, the same as those used daily in the Service of the Church. Will not what has been accepted *always* and *everywhere* have a little weight with you in helping to prove the truth of Christianity? You have seen these before, you have admired the depth of expression in the faces, the freshness of colouring, the grace of the drapery, but those they represented were to you as myths. Yet not in one, but in many books, these Acts of the martyrs are recorded, and now these walls, decorated by the art of more than a thousand years ago, corroborate their testimony. You admire self-denial in the abstract; here you find it in reality. Here S. Alexius, leaving bride and parents and affluence, goes forth to lead a life of self-abnegation, and putting his hand



« to the plough, until death, looks not back. Here  
« again you have the apostolic words fulfilled and the  
« unbelieving husband converted by the believing wife.  
« Look down below into the chambers, turned by  
« S. Clement into a retreat for prayer; he, the noble  
« Roman, forsaking the gorgeousness of an imperial  
« court, to labour with Paul the aged, one who wrought  
« with his own hands for his living, and a prisoner.  
« Is not that self-devotion? Walk round and round this  
« ancient Basilica, you will find the same story on each  
« fresco; all unite in silently but effectually preach-  
« ing the same doctrine — death to the world, in order  
« to attain to life in that which shall never pass  
« away. Above us, but beneath the high altar, repose  
« all that is mortal of S. Clement and S. Ignatius.  
« Why were they martyrs? Because they loved the  
« truth better than their lives. Because the ancient  
« Romans, the conquerors of the world, delighted to  
« see an aged man, against whom not a whisper of  
« slander could be breathed, torn to pieces by wild  
« beasts, or as he himself expressed it: « I am the wheat  
« of Christ. I must therefore be ground and broken  
« by the teeth of wild beasts, that I may become His  
« pure and spotless bread ». A few years ago, and those  
« blessed relics were borne in triumph through the  
« arena, once flowing with his blood, and the stones  
« which echoed to *Death to the Christians* resounded

« to the glorious *Te Deum*. What has effected this  
« change, from bloodshed to peace, from the cry of  
« the heathen persecutor to the triumphant song of  
« the Christian? Has civilization? No, a thousand times  
« no. A Fisherman of Galilee, a Jew of Tarsus, a few  
« disciples, some of them weak women and striplings,  
« have won a grander victory than ever did Alexander  
« or Augustus. Rome conquered the world, but they  
« conquered Rome. And your boasted reason, what  
« does it say? Does it not bow to the Almighty Power  
« which alone could effect this marvellous change? Is  
« not Christianity divine? Do not the very stones of  
« Rome attest it? Do not the walls of *San Clemente*  
« and of the Coliseum suffice alone, without any other  
« proofs, to bear requisite testimony to the truth, which  
« the Church, watered by the blood of martyrs, teaches?  
« Oh! wretched, miserable doubter, be sceptical no  
« longer. You admire him who dies, for a principle,  
« however faulty; venerate those who looked for no  
« applause of man, but an unfading wreath in Heaven.  
« You profess to love truth. Think of those who sealed  
« their testimony to it with their blood, sooner than  
« throw a few grains of incense before an imperial  
« image. You feel your heart glow within you, while  
« listening to the histories of Clement, and Cyril, and  
« Alexius, and their patient self-denial. Waver then no  
« more, unstable mortal. Learn from these old walls

« and decaying paintings the eternal truths they elo-  
« quently, though silently proclaim, and years hence,  
« may be, in your distant home, far away from this  
« City of martyrs, you will remember with thankful-  
« ness as the Feast of S. Clement comes round in the  
« Church's year, the lesson they taught you. Yes, these  
« very walls, hidden for centuries, have now, as it  
« were, been brought to light to add yet a testimony  
« to the awful fact, in this age of inconsistency and  
« incredulity, fast gliding from the mind of man, that  
« this sphere is not to revolve for ever, that a pagan  
« morality is not sufficient to cleanse its corruption,  
« that the most virtuous heathen that ever lived lacked  
« that consoling faith in a Communion of Saints, which  
« sheds a soft, benignant light on the dreariest path  
« trod by a Christian, and so died, as he lived, without  
« that peace, which the highest honours of earth fail to  
« bestow ».

The voice ceased, and I awoke. The sky was still a cloudless azure, the daws were still cawing above me, all around appeared the same, I alone was different, and as I walked from the great amphitheatre, I turned once more for a last look at the central Cross, that holy symbol so dearly loved by the early Christians, that even on their very tiles they engraved it;

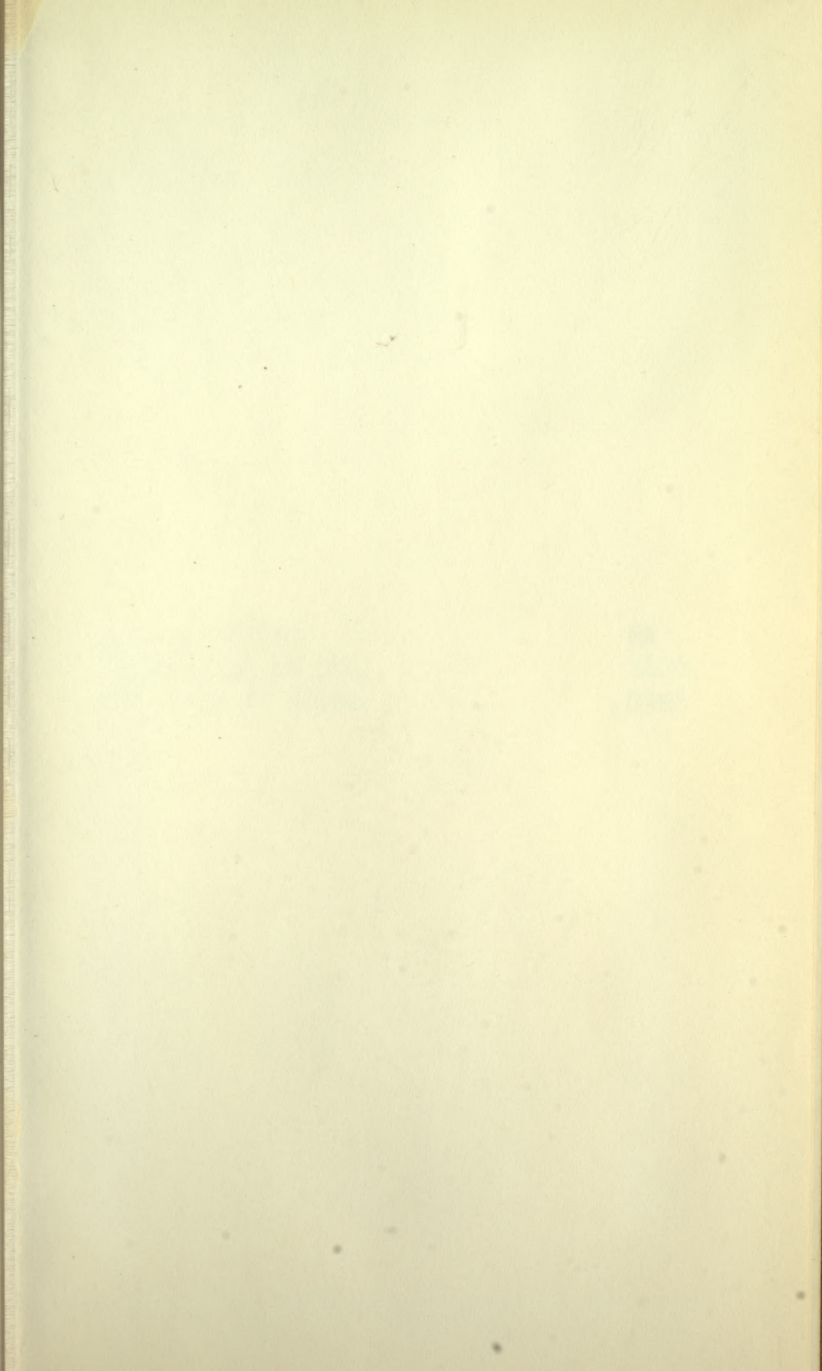


and I felt that I too had been conquered by its power,  
on the spot where the martyrs won their crown.

« Made co-heirs with Christ in glory,  
His celestial bliss they share;  
May they now before Him bending  
Help us onward by their prayer;

That, this weary life completed,  
And its fleeting trials past,  
We may win eternal glory  
In our Father's Home at last ».









NOLAN, Louis.  
Basilica of St.  
Clemente in Rome.

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